

THE
LETTERS
OF
SAINT
PAUL

translated by

ARTHUR S. WAY

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THE LETTERS OF ST. PAUL
HEBREWS

THE LETTERS OF ST. PAUL

TO SEVEN CHURCHES AND THREE FRIENDS
WITH THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS.

Translated by
ARTHUR S. WAY, M.A.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	vii
CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF ST. PAUL .	xv
GENERAL REMARKS	i
THE FIRST LETTER TO THE <i>Thessalonians</i> .	3
THE SECOND LETTER TO THE <i>Thessalonians</i> .	12
THE FIRST (EXTANT) LETTER TO THE <i>Corinthians</i>	17
THE SECOND (EXTANT) LETTER TO THE <i>Corinthians</i>	56
THE LETTER TO THE <i>Galatians</i>	81
THE LETTER TO THE <i>Romans</i>	95
THE LETTERS WRITTEN DURING THE FIRST IMPRISON- MENT	135
THE LETTER TO THE <i>Philippians</i>	136
THE LETTER TO THE <i>Colossians</i>	147
THE LETTER TO <i>Philemon</i> .	156
THE LETTER TO THE <i>Ephesians</i>	159
LETTERS WRITTEN AFTER ST. PAUL'S LIBERATION	173
THE FIRST LETTER TO <i>Timotheus</i> .	174
THE LETTER TO <i>Titus</i>	185
THE SECOND LETTER TO <i>Timotheus</i>	190
THE LETTER TO THE <i>Hebrews</i>	198

PREFACE TO THE EIGHTH EDITION

WHEN preparing the second edition of *The Letters of Saint Paul*, Arthur S. Way, the translator, said that some five-hundred changes were being made. They were not necessary as a result of haste or carelessness in the first edition. They were made because, since the first edition, he had had access to an adequate library for reference and had enjoyed the comforts of a more permanent home. Credit was indicated for the helpful and friendly criticism given on the first edition. Positive assurance that every passage had received his reconsideration, based on the various interpretations of scholars, was vouchsafed to the readers. The whole aim in putting out this translation has been to eliminate unnecessary colloquial or undignified expressions, and to arrive at a correct and reverent translation.

Hebrews was added in the second edition (1906) in response to urgent requests.

PREFACE

THE object of this version of St. Paul's letters is to set before English readers (1) the meaning of the original, but not in the literality of a word-for-word rendering which is the method used in the Authorised and Revised Versions: (2) the supply of the necessary links between thoughts, subjects and arguments, made clear to the reader without his having to refer to notes or to a commentary.

The reason is that many present-day readers misunderstand the Authorised Version in its close literality of such renderings as 'quench not the spirit,' and 'have no confidence in the flesh,' along with many other passages which were clear to the ordinary readers more than 300 years ago, but are no longer so because of changes in our language through the years.

The Authorised Version sometimes is quite oriental in the vagueness of the sense which it conveys to the unassisted reader, which is due to the limited range allowed in translating the prepositions. Prepositions 'on,' 'by,' 'through,' 'with,' are compelled frequently to do duty for which they are inadequate. What they are intended to express is practically nullified by the fact that they are required to express too much.

Praise of the dignity and the beauty of the Authorised Version and the charm of its rhythm cannot be denied. The first requisite of a translation is that it shall convey with absolute clearness the meaning of the original. But in that respect the Authorised Version no longer does justice to its assignment in many parts of the Epistles.

Readers and hearers not trained in theology, who do not consult commentaries, find that a prominent feature of St. Paul's style seems to be a lack of continuity of thought. There is transition from subject to subject, from step to step of an

argument with connecting links apparently missing. The writer appears to pass from one thought to another with no obvious connection with it. Such peculiarities are especially in evidence in Romans and First Corinthians. The result is that to *a comparatively few* St. Paul is a connected thinker or a writer whose language is characterised by sharp precision.

There is no thought of condemning the Authorised Version on these grounds. The purpose which its authors had in view was almost as perfect as the conditions under which they worked allowed for. The age was one of doctrinal controversy. The final appeal was invariably to *the letter* of Scripture. Therefore, the one thing needful in the eyes of the theologians of that time was a version which represented the *ipsissima verba* of Scripture (the very words or language).

The Revised Version, being a revision, as the name implies, was made under certain restrictions, resulting in some advantages and some disadvantages over the Authorised Version. Against the advantages must be set one serious disadvantage. Those wishing to grasp the *spirit* of St. Paul's teaching in order to follow intelligently his arguments in detail, to enter into his thoughts and emotions, to appreciate his circumstances and mental attitude, also those of the persons he was addressing, are baffled usually by the absence of assistance in the versions most commonly used. Ministers frequently make reference to the apparent unreality of the claims of Christian doctrines upon their hearers. In some measure this may be attributable to the literary form in which the elaboration of those doctrines by Paul, and by him only, are presented to the people in his writings. The somewhat obsolete diction produces a sense of aloofness from the speech and from the thoughts of our daily life. The frequent seeming vagueness of expression, leaving too much to the imagination, and the apparent disconnectedness create a feeling of unreality. It may have something to do with making Christian faith and practice so much a matter of formal profession and ritual observance. The result is a daily life of thought and action that seem to belong to two different

spheres. St. Paul is not like Paul, a man, with his weaknesses, his impulsiveness, his clinging affection, and his clear-headed common sense. His writings are not read as real letters. They are *Epistles*, religious and doctrinal treatises, grave, dignified, and somewhat stilted. When they are split up into chapters and verses as they are in the common versions, they scarcely read as organised wholes, as outpourings of intense earnestness, dominated each by its leading thought of which the writer never loses sight. Large portions of some of them are too often regarded as wastes of somewhat obscure reference to views and practices which have largely lost all interest for us moderns. However, such portions are interspersed with portions of exquisite charm and spiritual refreshment. Particularly when removed from their context these obscure passages contain a large number of verses which are very inspiring, suggestive, and comforting. They also contain a multitude of admonitions, appeals and warnings, the connection of which, referring to the circumstances of Paul's life, is but vaguely perceived.

These versions giving the literal rendering as they do, constitute a court of appeal in matters of faith, the only possible one. It is also the only form of translation about which there can be anything like the general agreement. No expanded, explanatory translation could be final, as is evidenced by the variety of opinions as to the interpretation of many passages in the *Epistles*. This form of translation is the only one for which permanent acceptance could reasonably be expected. The *explanatory translation* which would suit the habits of thought and expression of one age would not suit those of another as do the Authorised and Revised Versions. The perfect literal translation is indeed indispensable. The welcome which has been accorded to more than one free version is evidence that there is a real want, perhaps more felt than expressed, for a translation which any person of ordinary education may read without having to pause in doubt as to the meaning of the Apostle Paul, a translation without the need

for groping after a clue to the transition from thought to thought, from argument to argument.

Excellent as some of the freer versions have been, they have seemed to fall short of the reader's full requirements in this respect: their authors do not appear to have fully recognised the necessity of supplying connective links. They seem to have accepted the apparent incoherence, or tendency of abrupt transition, as a characteristic of St. Paul's style, and in some measure, of his mental constitution.

A man like St. Paul who achieved so much, not by picturesque eloquence, but by the force of sheer argument, and whose few recorded speeches are clearly expressed, and perfectly connected, whose letters were described even by his opponents as 'weighty and powerful,'—far superior to his spoken utterances, would not have developed his views in his letters in such a manner as to leave the smallest chance, through any defects of style, that they should fail of having the effect which he desired. Rather, we may reasonably compare them to demonstrations in mathematics in which 'intermediate steps' are purposely left out, because it is assumed that the student is equipped to supply them almost unconsciously and to pass without any embarrassment from one stage to another.

We may assume that the people who first listened to these letters, read by the elder of the little church to a few dozen hearers crowded into an upper room, found no real difficulty in following the writer's line of thought, and that they did not carry away a vague impression of his meaning. It is certain that Paul did not intend, that he did not conceive it possible, that they should. Judging by the recorded effect of First Corinthians, not the easiest for modern readers, there seems no reason for supposing that they had difficulty following him. The mass of them were neither cultured, nor particularly intellectual, judging by their antecedents. To what, then, may we attribute the perfect intelligibility of Paul's letters to those to whom they were first addressed? These four things may go far toward accounting for it: (1) they would not be troubled

by purely verbal difficulties, because the letters were written in the language of their daily life, with the colloquialisms and word omissions obviously understood, to which they were accustomed. (2) The transfer from a secular to a religious connotation, of words with special usage given them by their teachers, also the peculiar strain put upon prepositions. (3) The hearers were familiar with Paul's manner. They would have heard, probably, many arguments of which the written letter furnished a condensed memorandum. (4) The bearer of the letter, always an intimate friend of the writer, sometimes his amanuensis, would be familiar probably with its contents beforehand, might have heard the Apostle's comments upon it, and possibly be entrusted with supplementary verbal communications, ready to explain difficulties, expand condensations and supply any links of thought that might be required. The public reader of the Epistle might then do this for the hearers, in running-comment style.

I have endeavoured to put my readers in the place of those who first listened to these letters. I have ventured, where it seemed necessary, to expand the sense in order to make it as plain to the modern reader as it was to those whose familiarity with the subjects, and with Paul's general treatment of them, with the language, with the shades of meaning due to the order of words, the use of particular tenses, the insertion of emphatic pronouns.

All might not have read precisely the same meaning into the words. Where I have presumed to differ from a received interpretation, I hope that I have at least conveyed the sense as it may have been understood by some present. Supplying the connections referred to must be on the basis of conjecture. Commentators differ from one another. The translator who designs his version to be, in one feature, a condensed commentary, cannot expect that his views will be accepted everywhere. I can hope that to some his version may prove suggestive and possibly helpful.

I might describe it as an attempt not to present everywhere

the verbal equivalent of what the Apostle said, but to convey what he meant. Take for instance Paul's use of a metaphor, condensed, or implied in the use of a certain word like 'grow,' 'build,' 'run.' I have expanded it, remembering that the hearers' thoughts would fill up the picture instinctively as it was familiar to them. That picture would be by a word whose bare lexicon-equivalent has not the same force for us.

I would deprecate the name of 'paraphrase' for my version. My aim has been to follow the original closely, to bring out the full meaning and even suggestion, of each word. I have deviated only when some expansion seemed advisable to convey the meaning of a passage. My objective has been to do away with the necessity for explanatory notes. The translation is sufficiently full to carry its own explanation. Some of the connective interpolations may seem bold, but in almost every instance they simply embody an explanation or they develop a hint given by some commentator of commanding authority. The transition link consists, in most cases, of a very few words. The principal exception is at the commencement of First Corinthians 9. There the sequence of Paul's argument has been a well-known *crux* of commentators.

Several passages are printed as 'hymns.' There are far more that have been treated in that way than in any previous version. This original feature may appear to some an unwarrantable liberty to take with the text. St. Paul's letters have references to hymns showing that they were in continual use, that they were employed to express, and even to interchange, devotional sentiments. Paul tells the Ephesian Christians to 'speak to one another in psalms, in hymns, in chants inspired by the Spirit.' Passages from the Psalms were sung by them no doubt. It is by no means certain that the 'psalms' referred to are the Psalms of David and it can hardly be so in First Corinthians 14: 26. The context shows that the composition of the psalms (or hymns) was one manifestation of the Gifts of the Spirit. One of the three nativity hymns quoted by St. Luke, the 'Benedictus,' was

composed under the Spirit's inspiration. Paul himself received the Spirit's gifts in a pre-eminent measure. It is likely, therefore, that hymns of his composition would have been contributed by him to the churches which he founded or fostered. Early examples of early Christian hymnology would have appeared in his letters. He would have quoted from hymns known to his readers. It has long been recognised that certain fragments such as 'Awake, thou that sleepest,' are of this character. Occasionally, stirred by his theme, Paul would himself have burst forth into hymns inspired by the subject. Would it not, rather, be strange if it were not so? The passages printed here as hymns reveal that in almost every instance they break the even flow of the argument. Or, they rise with a sudden leap over the more or less colloquial style which precedes or follows. The interruption is not in style only, but in sense. Sometimes they sum up, as in a rapture, the statements already made. The conclusions calmly deduced and soberly stated are suffused with the sudden glory. We are not surprised to find that these passages often mark the climax of the argument. They recapitulate its results in a higher strain. They can sometimes be lifted out of the text without leaving a break in its continuity. Sometimes they are complete in themselves. Sometimes they suggest the thought that they are quoted from a longer hymn.

Their structure reveals their rhythmical character, the antithetical balance of clauses, the grouping of words, which we call the lyric portions of the Old Testament.

We find them to be what we might expect to find in hymns if we consider their themes. Sometimes they crystallise a creed, Colossians 1: 13-20; they furnish a ritual-chant, First Corinthians 11: 23-25; they set forth the profession of a life-purpose, Second Corinthians 5: 14-18; they express the eternal hope, Second Corinthians 4: 16-5: 10; they anticipate the Second Coming, Second Thessalonians 1: 7-10; they convey mutual encouragement, Ephesians 6: 10-17. There is no need to make the list exhaustive.

Many readers will concede that almost any of these *might* have been used as hymns in the early church. Their tone and style show they were eminently adapted for such a purpose. There is, therefore, nothing new in this theory. I have not treated as hymn passages, however poetic in sentiment and style, those which seemed not suited for congregational use, i.e., Romans 8:19-24.

In translating the passages I have not gone out of my way to attain rhythmical cadence or poetic style. My one object has been to furnish a clear, precise, and connected sense. In one feature of this version I have, not without misgivings, departed from the practice of previous translators in the substitution of 'Messiah' for 'Christ.' (1) Because *Christ* is to modern readers a proper name, non-significant, and so conveying nothing of what was implied in '*Christos*.' (2) Because the essence of St. Paul's preaching was that the promised Messiah of the Old Testament had now come. That He had come for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews. This was a continual challenge to the Jews, and a continual reminder to the Gentiles that they were henceforth heirs to all the blessings of the Old Covenant with Abraham, together with all the blessings of the New. The jealousy excited by the announcement that the Jews had no exclusive property in the Messiah and His kingdom is the key to nearly all the persecutions to which Paul and his converts were subjected. I am aware that the Gospels give the prefixed article to indicate the exact equivalence of the word 'Christos' to the *title* of the Messiah of the Old Testament. In the Epistles, the absence of the article is evidence that the transition of the word from a title to a proper name was in progress, if not complete. The fact that to every Greek-speaking convert the name was significant, 'The Anointed,' and that, wherever there were Jews, converted or unconverted in the same community, that significance would be emphasised by the stress laid upon it, whether in acceptance or opposition, seems to weigh in favour of using a term which connects the Old Covenant with the New. It tends to bring the modern reader nearer to the attitude of the ancient.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF ST. PAUL

(*The dates given are, mainly, those adopted by Conybeare and Howson*)

- A.D.
- 30. Crucifixion. Gift of the Spirit at Pentecost.
 - 36. Martyrdom of Stephen.
 - 37. Conversion of St. Paul. [Caligula succeeds Tiberius.]
 - 38. From Damascus to Jerusalem, thence to Tarsus.
 - 39-43. Preaching in Syria and Cilicia. [41. Claudius succeeds Caligula.]
 - 44. Brought from Tarsus to Antioch by Barnabas. [Death of Herod Agrippa I.]
 - 45. Visits Jerusalem with Barnabas. Famine.
 - 46-47. At Antioch.
 - 48-49. *First Missionary Journey*:—Antioch to Cyprus, Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe. Back by same route.
 - 50. Paul and Barnabas at 'Council of Jerusalem.' [Caractacus taken to Rome.]
 - 51. *Second Missionary Journey*:—Antioch to Cilicia, Lycaonia, Galatia, Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth.
 - 52. Writes, at Corinth, FIRST LETTER TO THESSALONIANS. [Jews expelled from Rome.]
 - 53. Still at Corinth. SECOND LETTER TO THESSALONIANS.
 - 54. To Jerusalem, thence to Antioch. [Nero succeeds Claudius.]
Third Missionary Journey to Ephesus.
 - 55-56. At Ephesus.
 - 57. Writes, at Ephesus, FIRST LETTER TO CORINTHIANS.
The riot in the theatre. From Ephesus goes to

- Macedonia: there writes SECOND LETTER TO CORINTHIANS. Goes (winter) to Corinth: there writes LETTER TO GALATIANS.
58. At Corinth. Writes LETTER TO ROMANS. From Corinth *via* Philippi and Miletus to Jerusalem: there arrested.
59. At Cæsarea. [Nero murders his mother, Agrippina.]
60. Sent to Rome by Festus (about August). Shipwrecked (winter).
61. Arrives at Rome. [Rebellion of Boadicea in Britain.]
62. At Rome. Writes (spring) LETTER TO PHILIPPIANS. Writes (autumn) LETTERS TO COLOSSIANS and PHILEMON. LETTER TO EPHESIANS.
63. Acquitted. Goes (*Philippians* 2: 24) to Macedonia, and (*Philemon* 24) to Asia Minor.
64. To Spain (?). [Great Fire at Rome, and persecution of Christians.]
65. In Spain (?).
66. To Macedonia (*I Timothy* 1:3). [The Jewish War begins.]
67. Writes, from Macedonia, FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY. Writes (autumn), from Ephesus, LETTER TO TITUS. At Nicopolis (winter): re-arrested.
68. In prison at Rome. Writes SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY. Executed (May or June). [Death of Nero, in middle of June.]
70. Destruction of Jerusalem by Romans under Titus (August).

THE LETTERS OF ST. PAUL

GENERAL REMARKS

NONE of the letters of St. Paul were written simply to maintain kindly relations with the various churches. Each of them was evoked by what appeared at the time to the Apostle a very pressing need. His objects in writing were, broadly, six:—

1. To correct false impressions which were working mischief in churches. (*First and Second Thessalonians.*)

2. To reform abuses which threaten to sap the morality of a church. (*First Corinthians.*)

3. To encourage churches which were passing through special trials. (*Philippians.*)

4. To crush heresies in the germ, especially those relating to the person and office of Christ, and the relation of the Church to Him. (*Colossians, Ephesians.*)

5. To combat the machinations of the party of Judaism in the church, the emissaries of which constantly laboured to undo his work in two ways; by insisting that faith in Christ was insufficient for salvation, without conformity to the ritual of the Mosaic Law; by impugning his authority as an apostle, and misrepresenting his character and motives. (*Galatians, Romans, Second Corinthians.*)

It is to be noted that all his letters to the churches, with three exceptions, begin with a pointed reference to the fact that he received his commission as an apostle, not from any church authorities, but directly from God. The exceptions are, the letters to the Thessalonians, which were written before his claim was so challenged, and that to the Philippians, to whom, presumably, his enemies had not yet ventured to malign him.

6. To strengthen the hands of fellow-labourers, and to

advise them on matters of church-administration. (*First, Second Timothy, and Titus.*)

The letter to Philemon stands apart: it was dictated by humanity and personal affection.

With respect to the 'persecutions' frequently referred to in these letters, it must be borne in mind that these were different, both in source and character, from those which we commonly associate with the history of the early Christians. They were not set on foot by the Roman government: the stake, the cross, the wild beasts of the arena, formed no part of them. The authors of them were generally, directly or indirectly, the Jewish colonies (very populous and ferociously fanatic) in the various towns. Sometimes they took the form of mob-violence (how terrible this could be, is shewn by Paul's many experiences of it): sometimes, by bribery or intimidation, venal or pusillanimous magistrates might be induced to punish Christians as 'common disturbers of the peace' (as happened to Paul and Silas): we find occasional references to Christians being made the victims of false accusations: in the case of Jewish converts who, as was the case with 'myriads' (Acts 21: 20—a possible hyperbole), had not broken with Judaism, and who were still in communion with the synagogues, penal discipline might be, and probably was, inflicted on slight pretext with ruthless severity, as in the case of Paul, who five times received the thirty-nine lashes. But the Roman government itself, so far from instituting persecutions, was looked upon (as being the bulwark of law and order) as the protector of the church, but for which protection its members would have speedily fallen victims to the fanatical hatred of the Jews, who swarmed in every city throughout the empire. Hence Paul very naturally cautions believers to be submissive to constituted authority, and to pray for its representatives. It was not till two years after the last of the letters to the churches had been written, that the blame for the great fire of Rome was fastened (perhaps by Jewish influences) on the Christians, which gave rise to the awful Neronian persecution.

THE FIRST LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

[WRITTEN ABOUT 52 A.D.]

The Persons addressed. The great Macedonian seaport of Thessalonica was visited by Paul and Silas in 51. A.D. They spent the first three weeks of their stay in appeals to the Jewish residents to accept Jesus as the promised Messiah. They gained some adherents among the Jews, but many more among the Gentiles. The non-believing Jews, in their fierce jealousy at seeing the blessings of the Chosen People offered to Gentiles, raised a furious riot, which was so far successful that Paul had to leave the country. The enmity of the Jews being, however, directed mainly against his own person, his companions, Silas and Timotheus, were able to remain at Berœa, and foster the young life of the Church.

The reason why it was written. Next year, when Paul was at Corinth, Silas and Timotheus came thither from Macedonia, and informed him that the hostility of the Jews was continually stirring up persecutions against the Church, but that its members were bearing up bravely; that they cherished loving memories of him and remained faithful to his teaching. Their minds were, however, becoming unsettled, and their daily life disorganised, by the growing excitement with which they anticipated the Second Coming of the Lord. Believing it to be imminent, they were beginning to neglect the ordinary duties of life, so that the Church was threatened with pauperism. On the other hand, they were disquieted by doubts respecting members of the Church who had died since their conversion. Having, apparently, no clear grasp of the doctrine of the resurrection, they feared lest these might be deprived of their

place among the glorified saints who were to meet the Lord at His appearing.

THE LETTER

I

Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus
to the Church of Thessalonians
which is in union with God the Father, and with our Lord
Jesus, the Messiah—

Grace be to you, and heart-peace.

I am ever rendering thanks to God on behalf of all of you, for I make mention of you always in my prayers. I unceasingly call to mind your work inspired by faith, your toil born of love, your strong endurance which leans on the hope that waits for the Coming of our Lord, Jesus the Messiah, waits as in the very presence of God our Father. For I know, O brothers mine, beloved of God, how you were chosen out of the world. I know that the Glad-tidings I brought were not limited to the mere declaration of the message, but were attended with evidence of miraculous power, with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and with ample assurance of success. And you know what sort of man you found me to be, as I laboured for your sake, when I was among you. You, also, took my Lord and me for your examples, when you received that message, with all the affliction it entailed on you—ay, and the joy, inspired by the Holy Spirit, that came with it. And so you became the model church for all the believers of Macedonia and Achaia. From you pealed forth the trumpet-call of that message of our Lord; and not through Macedonia and Achaia only, but in every land have gone abroad the tidings of your faith that looks to God—no need is there for me to tell them of you! They are themselves spreading the story of my mission,

are telling how I was received among you, are telling how you turned to God from your idols, turned to serve God—a living, a true God—turned to await the Great Coming of His Son from the heavens, the Son whom He raised from the dead—Jesus, who is our Deliverer from the Wrath that is drawing ever nearer.

II

Yes, you know, without my reminding you, my brothers, the story of my mission to you: you know that it was not barren of results. I had suffered ere then: I had been brutally treated, as you know, in Philippi: yet, in the strength of our God, I spoke out unfalteringly to you, amid storm and stress, the Glad-tidings of God. Ay, and my appeal to you was based on no delusion: it was not prompted by immoral motives, nor by a schemer's guile. No! God had tested me ere He entrusted me with His Glad-tidings; and by that right do I speak. I aim not at giving satisfaction to men, but to God who tests the hearts of us all. Never did I stoop to flattery—you know I did not: never did I cloak with specious professions my own personal ambitions—God is my witness! Never did I covet honour from men, neither from you nor from others; and yet, as Messiah's apostle, I might have assumed airs of authority. Ah no! but I was unassuming—like one of yourselves. I was like the mother that lovingly nurses her own children. Yearning thus over you, I gave you—with a glad heart I gave you—a share not only in the Good-news of God, but of my very life and soul too—so passing dear to me had you grown! Ah yes, you remember, brothers mine, my toil and my travail. By night, by day, did I ply my handicraft, determined to burden none of you with my maintenance, while I heralded forth to you the Glad-tidings of God. You, you can witness for me—ay, and God is my witness—how unworldly, how unselfish, how irreproachable I proved myself in my relations to you who have embraced the Faith. You know, O you know, how with each of you, one by one, as a father with his own children, I pleaded,

how I encouraged you, how I adjured you, to live lives worthy of that God who was calling you, is calling you still, to enter His Kingdom, to pass into the glory of His Presence.

For this reason I, like yourselves, am unceasingly giving thanks to God, because, when you received the message of God that you heard from me, you accepted it as no message of men, but—as it in very truth is—a message of God, the message that is still a soul-thrilling power in you who believe. Yes, you, brothers mine, followed the example of the Churches of God which are in union with Messiah Jesus in Judæa. You followed it in enduring the same sufferings from your own countrymen, as they did from the Jews. The Jews!—they murdered the Lord, murdered Jesus, murdered his prophets before him: they have hounded us, his apostles, from city to city: they are kindling God's displeasure; they are the enemies of all the human race—their enemies, in that they fain would hinder me from so speaking to the Gentiles that they may be saved! In all this they are steadily filling up the measure of their own sins. But God's wrath has overtaken them: it is the beginning of the end.¹

But I, my brothers, after suffering the pangs of bereavement in severance from you for a while, for just a little while—a severance from the sight of your faces, not, oh not from your hearts!—have been impatient, more than impatient, with passionate yearning, to look upon your faces. And so I—yes, I Paul—made up my mind once and again to visit you: what blocked my path was none other than Satan. Well might I wish to see you. What hope cheers me?—what joy thrills me? what will be my victor's wreath of exultant triumph? What, save *you*, when you and I stand in the presence of our Lord Jesus in the Day of His Appearing? Ah yes, it is you that are my pride, you my joy!

¹ The news of the expulsion of the Jews from Rome, owing to their turbulence, would have just reached Paul. Their rebellious disaffection in Palestine went on increasing with the years, till, fourteen years later, the war began which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem.

III

So, when the strain of suspense grew intolerable, I determined to submit to being left at Athens alone; and I sent Timotheus my brother, who is God's servant in spreading the Glad-tidings of Messiah. I sent him to strengthen you, and to exhort you to adhere to your faith, that none of you might be unnerved when encompassed by the afflictions I have referred to; for I need not tell you that these are a necessity of our position. Indeed, when I was with you, I used to forewarn you that to be afflicted is our destiny. That has come to pass, and you know it by experience. Accordingly, when I could no longer endure the suspense, I sent to learn how your faith stood the test; for I dreaded to hear that, in consequence of the tempter's assaults on you, my past toil had proved fruitless. But now that Timotheus has just returned to me from you, and brought me the glad news of the steadfastness of your faith, of the glow of your love, has told me that you still cherish a kindly remembrance of me, that you long to see me, just as I long to see you—ah, now, brothers mine, I have, through your faith, been filled with comfort in the thought of you, a comfort which rises triumphant above all my privation, all my affliction. Yes, this to me is very life, the consciousness that you stand firm in union with our Lord. With what thanks can I pay my debt to God on your behalf, my debt for all the joy that thrills me for you, now when I feel the very presence of our God? Night and day am I praying with passionate earnestness that I may see your faces, that I may fully supply all deficiencies in your faith. May God Himself, our own Father, may our Lord Jesus, helm straight my course, home again to you! And you—may the Lord fill you more and more—ay, till you overflow—with love to one another and to all men, even as my heart is full of love toward you! And so may He firmly root your hearts in holiness, till they are irreproachable—holiness such as shall bear the very scrutiny of God our Father, in that day when our Lord Jesus shall come down attended by all His Holy Ones!

IV

I have yet to add this, my brothers—I beg you, I appeal to you by your love for our Lord Jesus, that, according to the directions you received from me as to the ordering of your lives so as to win God's approval—as, indeed, you are doing—you would try to attain to yet fuller perfection. I need not remind you: you know what precepts I gave you by the inspiration of the Lord Jesus. God's purpose, in fact, is this, that yours be a consecrated life: to particularise—that you shrink away from licentiousness; that each of you learn to gain control over his own body, as a consecrated and honourable thing, not in subjection to lustful passion, like those Gentiles who know not God; that you do not, in this matter, trespass on a brother's rights, nor overreach him. The Lord is the avenger of all such sins, as indeed I forewarned you, when I uttered my solemn protest against them. For the life to which God has called us is no life of pollution: it is a life of consecration. Therefore, whoever sets at nought these warnings is setting at nought, not man, but God, that very God who is bestowing His Holy Spirit on you.

As to the necessity of love for your fellow-believers, there is no need for me to write to impress *that* on you. You yourselves have been taught by God to love one another. You are, in fact, already displaying that love towards all your brother-believers through the length and breadth of Macedonia. So I do but exhort you, my brothers, to rise to higher heights still. I urge you also to make it a point of honour to avoid religious excitement, to go on performing your personal duties, and to earn your bread by the labour of your hands (as I have already charged you) that so you may be, in the eyes of the non-Christian world, respectable members of society, and also may not be pauperised.

And, in this connection, I wish you to have no false conceptions, my brothers, of the lot of those who are now sleeping in death: you must not grieve for them as the heathen do, who have no hope. If we really believe that Jesus not only died,

but has risen, we must, by inference, believe that those too who have, through Jesus' power, been hushed to sleep; will God draw heavenward in Jesus' train. Yes, this I tell you, as a revelation from God, that we who may be surviving up to the Day of the Coming of the Lord shall most certainly not enter into His presence before those who have fallen asleep. For—

Hymn of the Second Coming

The Lord Himself, with a reveille-call
With the shout of an archangel,
And with the clarion of God,
Shall descend from heaven. [rise;
Then the dead who are in Messiah's keeping shall be first to
Then we, the living yet left on earth,
Shall be with them caught away amidst clouds
Into the sky, to that meeting with our Lord;
And so for evermore with the Lord shall we be.
With this assurance, therefore, comfort one another.

V

But, on the question of the time, the precise date, of the Coming, my brothers, it is not necessary for you to be informed in my letter. You yourselves know perfectly well that

Hymn of the Day of the Lord

The Day of the Lord, as comes a robber in the
night, so cometh.
When men are saying, 'All is peace and safety!'
Then on a sudden destruction looms over them,
As the birth-pang of a travailing woman:
There shall be no escape for them—none!

But you, my brothers, are not groppers in darkness, that

the Day should, like a robber, take you unawares. No, all of you are sons of light, sons of day—

Hymn of the Watchers

Not of the night are we, nor of the gloom!
Oh, then, let us not sleep, as do other men;
But let us keep vigil and be sober.
For they that slumber, by night they slumber;
And they that are drunken, by night are they drunken:
But we who are of the day, let us be sober,
Having arrayed us in corslet of faith and love,
And, for our helmet, in the hope of salvation;
Because God appointed us not to be victims of His wrath,
But to the winning of salvation,
Through our Lord, Jesus the Messiah,
Who died for us, to this end,
That, whether in life we yet keep vigil, or sleep in death,
Sharing His life we may live.

Then still comfort one another, still build each other up into His temple, as I know you are doing already.

Now I beg you, my brothers, to appreciate those who are toiling amongst you, who are your leaders in the Lord's work, and who give you admonition. Accord them a high place—the highest of all—in your love, in recognition of their services.

Live at peace with each other.

Once more I beseech you, brothers, admonish those who will not conform to discipline, encourage the sinking hearts, reach a helping hand to the weak; be forbearing with all. See to it that none of you requite wrong with wrong, but at all times aim at showing kindness to one another; and, indeed, to all men.

Be evermore glad-hearted: pray unweariedly: find something to thank God for in all things; for this is the purpose of God with respect to you, as shown in Messiah Jesus' coming. ¶ In your church-gatherings do not repress manifestations of

the Spirit's gifts; do not treat slightly inspired preaching.¹ Nay, rather test all such utterances, and adopt what is really good.

Shrink away from evil, in whatever form it appears.

Now may God himself, the author of peace, hallow you in all your powers. May your immortal spirit, your mortal nature, your very body, be preserved unimpaired, so as to be found flawless in the Day of the Coming of our Lord. Faithful is He who is calling you to Himself: He will so hallow you, so keep you.

Brothers mine, pray on for me!

Greet all the members of the Church with the kiss of consecration.

I solemnly charge you, in the Lord's name, to have this letter read to all the members of the Church.

The grace of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah, be with you.

¹ Of the Gifts of the Spirit, there were two, the exercise of which might, if unregulated, destroy the decorous order of church-gatherings—the gift of 'tongues,' and that of the inspired rhapsody of the 'prophets.' To what disorders they might lead, if unchecked, we shall see in the Letter to the church at Corinth. There the members, like the rest of the population, were deficient in the sense of discipline, and the leaders were weak and temporising. But in Thessalonica the native stock was of manlier fibre, and there was a stronger leaven of the Roman element, with its deep-rooted instincts of law and order. Hence, while at Corinth there was a tendency to undue laxity, at Thessalonica it would seem that the general feeling of the church was in favour of what St. Paul considered undue repression of these indications of the Spirit's presence.

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

[WRITTEN ABOUT 53 A.D.]

The reason why it was written. St. Paul's first letter, though it seems to have quieted fears as to the exclusion of departed friends from a share in the Second Coming, had not been sufficiently definite to allay the feverish excitement created by the expectation that the Great Day was imminent, and might come with the next day's dawn. People *could* not settle down to their daily duties and vocations; and the situation was aggravated by prophetic revelations which some claimed to have received, and by the rumour that a letter had arrived from the apostle (it would seem indeed that a spurious one was being handed about) supporting the extremest views; hence, socially and spiritually, the Christian community was becoming more and more disorganised.

The apostle's main object in this second letter was to put an end, once and for all, to these misapprehensions by an emphatic declaration that, before that Day dawned, certain other unmistakable events, the development of which had as yet not even begun, must run their course.

Who was the 'Man of Sin' referred to in the letter, what was the 'power that holds him in check' (the reference was quite intelligible to Paul's readers), is, for us, matter of pure conjecture.

THE LETTER

I

Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus
to the Church of the Thessalonians in the keeping

of God our Father and of our Lord Jesus the Messiah:

Grace be to you, and heart-peace, sent forth from God the Father, and from our Lord, Jesus the Messiah.

I feel I am bound to thank God hourly on your account, my brothers—I have indeed every reason for doing so—because your faith is growing ever higher, because your love is overflowing towards each other, ay, the love of every one of you. Hence I myself am ever finding something in you to boast of among the churches of God. I exult in your unflinching endurance, your faith amid all your persecutions, all the afflictions that you endure. These you are to regard as a token of the just decision of God, of His purpose that you be adjudged worthy of a place in the Kingdom of God, in the cause of which you are now suffering. ‘His just decision,’ I said—as it is, if it be justice on God’s part to requite with affliction those who are afflicting you, and to reward you, who are now enduring affliction, with rest, in company with us, your fellow-sufferers. And so shall it be in that Day when

Hymn of the Second Coming

The cleaving heavens shall disclose the Lord Jesus
Attended by the angel-ministers of His power,
Encircled with glowing flame,
In act to wreak vengeance on those heathen who ignore God,
On those Jews who refuse obedience to the Glad-tidings
Of our Lord Jesus.
Such men shall reap for retribution
Irrevocable destruction that bans them the presence of the
Lord,
That glorious vision of His might that shall be unveiled
When He descends to be encompassed with glory,
The glory-host of His Holy Ones,
Comes to be the World’s Wonder,
Haloed about by all that have believed on Him,
In that Day.

And you will be there, because my testimony to you was believed.

Looking forward to that consummation, I am also praying, praying hourly for you. I pray that God may count you worthy of the heritage to which He has called you. I pray that He may in His might fulfil to the uttermost your eager aspirations to goodness, and perfect your work which faith inspires. So shall the name of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah, be crowned with glory in your lives. So shall you be crowned with glory by union with Him, in pursuance of the gracious purpose of our God, and of our Lord Jesus.

II

Now I beg you, my brothers—with respect to this Coming of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, and our own gathering to meet Him—not to drift storm-tossed from your mental moorings, not to give way to hysterical excitement (whether it be through some pretended ‘revelation of the Spirit,’ or through some message or letter purporting to come from me) under the impression that the ‘Day of the Lord’ is imminent. Let no one, by any artifice, deceive you. That Day will not dawn till first there have come two things—the Revolt from the Faith, and the revelation of the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, who opposes himself to, and exalts himself above, every being that bears the name of God, in fact, above every object of worship, going so far as to throne himself in the temple of God, parading himself as the very Deity. Have you forgotten that, while I was still among you, I kept telling you this? And now you know what it is that holds him in check, postponing his revelation till the date appointed for him. But come he will, for the veiled tendency of wickedness is already stirring the world. Only, the power that holds all in check will continue to operate till it be swept from the path—*then*, then shall be revealed that Lawless One. But him will the Lord Jesus blast with the breath of His mouth, will annihilate him with the splendour of His appearing. Again, a distinctive feature of

that Lawless One's appearance shall be a special exertion of Satan's influence, attended with all his power, with signs, with delusive marvels, and with every conceivable deception of wickedness which victimises those who are in the path that leads to ruin, who are there because they first rejected all desire for the truth, and so barred their own way to salvation. In retribution for this, God is now sending on them an impulse to infatuation, leading them to credit that lie of the divinity of the Man of Sin, in order that all may be judged who have not only refused obedience to the truth, but have actually gloated over iniquity.

On the other hand, I feel bound, O my brothers whom our Lord has loved, to thank God hourly on your account, to thank God because He chose you, even from the beginning, for salvation wrought by the Spirit's hallowing power, and by the exercise of faith in the truth. To this state did God call you by the Glad-tidings I proclaimed, that you might gain for your own a share in the glory of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah.

So then, brothers, still stand firm: hold fast the instructions impressed on you, whether in addresses of mine, or in my letter. May our Lord Himself, Jesus the Messiah, may God our Father, who loved us, who has by His grace bestowed ever-present consolation and a blessed hope, comfort your hearts, and keep you unswerving in perfect rectitude alike of action and of speech.

III

One word more:—pray, pray on, brothers mine, for me. Pray that the Message of the Lord may speed untrammelled, that its glory may be recognised everywhere, as it was when it came to you. Pray that we may be delivered from wrong-headed and mischievous men: there are some, in fact, to whom faith seems impossible. But faithful is our Lord; and he will set you on a firm foundation; he will guard you from the Evil One. By my trust in the Lord I rest assured, with respect to you, that you are carrying out, and will continue to carry out,

the precepts I am giving you. And may our Lord pilot your hearts into the haven of the love of God, into such calm patience as was Messiah's!

Once more, I charge you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, to hold aloof from all members of the Church who persist in defying discipline, who will not conform to the instructions they received from me. There is no excuse for it: you know the lines on which it is your duty to follow my example. I did not, when I was among you, set myself above discipline. I did not eat my bread at any other man's expense, without working for it. No, with toil and travail, night and day I plied my handicraft, on purpose not to saddle any one of you with my maintenance. Not that I have not a right to claim maintenance; but I acted so, to set an example for your imitation. For, when I was among you, I used to impress this rule on you, 'If any man be not willing to work, let him not eat either.' The caution is not superfluous: I still hear that there are some among you who set discipline at nought—not busy men they, but busybodies! I charge such characters, I appeal to them by the authority of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, to work quietly, and to eat the bread of their own earning. As for you, my brothers, do not grow weary of doing right. If any one persists in refusing obedience to my injunctions, as conveyed in my letter, set a stigma on that man: hold no intercourse with him, that he may be shamed into submission. Still, you are not to count him as a personal enemy: simply remonstrate with him, as being a brother still.

And may the Lord Himself, the author of peace, bestow on you peace, always, under all conditions. The Lord be with you all.

Now, in my own handwriting, I add the salutation:—

*The grace of our Lord Jesus the Messiah be with
all of you. Paul.*

The above is the token of genuineness in every letter: it, and no other, is my own signature.

THE FIRST (EXTANT) LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

[WRITTEN ABOUT 57 A.D.]

The Persons addressed. During his stay of about two years (51-52 A.D.) at Corinth, St. Paul gained some Jewish converts, and many more from the ranks of the Gentile population, of which, beside the native Greeks, a large number were Italian freedmen. The members of the church were drawn mostly from the lower orders of society. At some time during his subsequent stay at Ephesus, the apostle wrote to the Corinthian church a letter (now lost), in which he spoke of his intention to visit them, urged on them the duty of contributing to the relief of the pauperised church at Jerusalem, and emphatically cautioned them against practising or countenancing immorality. In time there came a reply from Corinth, the bearers of which horrified Paul by the account they gave him of disorders which had sprung up during his four years' absence. The church was split up into religious factions: the uncontrolled exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, especially of the gift of 'tongues,' made their gatherings scenes of confusion and uproar: the Eucharistic meetings were profaned by selfish gluttony and drunkenness: women outraged public opinion by addressing mixed meetings unveiled: members of the church defrauded one another in business, and carried their disputes before heathen tribunals: some were relapsing into their own heathen practices of immorality, which they justified by pleading their Christian liberty ('all things are permissible for me' was their watchword): and, worst of all, a glaring case of incest was condoned by the leaders of opinion in the church. To these abuses the letter itself made no reference; indeed, the

general tone of it was one of entire self-satisfaction. It began with the assurance that they 'remembered him in all things, and were observing the rules he had laid down for their guidance.' It went on to say that, while they all possessed the Spirit's gift of inward 'illumination,'¹ there were yet differences of opinion among them with respect to points of conscience and matters of procedure, on which they would like to have an expression of his views, viz.:—

1. Were married relations quite consistent with utter Christian purity?

2. Should marriages or re-marriages be discouraged?

3. Was divorce, or re-marriage after divorce, allowable for believers?

4. Might believers be divorced from unbelievers?

5. Was virginity nobler than marriage, and, if so, should parents keep their daughters unwedded?

6. Might food which had been consecrated to idols (a small portion of which would be actually sacrificed, the rest being at the disposal of the priests) be eaten by Christians? Much of this was sold by the temple-officials to the meat-dealers, and, as sacrificed beasts had to be free from blemish, it might well be the best meat in the market. Moreover, there were, at festivals, great gratuitous banquets in the temple-precincts, which were a real boon to the poor: might not the Christians (many of whom were very poor) avail themselves of these, since they would do so, not as participating in idol-worship, but simply to satisfy hunger? The Gentile converts saw no harm in it: but the conscientious scruples of the Jewish converts were revolted at the bare idea.

7. The Jewish (and Roman) custom was to worship with covered heads, the Greek with uncovered: which was the proper one for Christians?

8. What was the relative excellence of the 'Gifts of the

¹ The word translated 'knowledge' in the A. V. But it is spoken of (ch. 12) as one of the gifts of the Spirit, and so would seem to mean spiritual enlightenment, or intuitive perception of the truth.

Spirit,' as involving the precedence to be given to their exercise at church-gatherings? The writers were inclined to give the first place to the 'Gift of Tongues.'

9. Might women address their public meetings?

10. How were the doubts and difficulties which surrounded the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body to be met?

11. What system would he recommend for raising and forwarding the alms-fund?

The apostle, in his answer, deals first with the disorders and immoralities which threatened to shipwreck the cause at Corinth, one-third of his letter being occupied with these, before he touches on the questions propounded to him.

THE LETTER

I

Paul—summoned by God's will to be an apostle of Jesus the Messiah—and Sosthenes the brother, send greeting

to the church of God that is in Corinth, to the people consecrated by union with Messiah Jesus, called to be His hallowed ones—even to them, and to all who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus the Messiah in every place—their Lord no less than ours:—

Grace and heart-peace descend on you from the presence of God our Father, and from our Lord, Jesus the Messiah.

I give thanks to my God—I am ever thanking Him on your account, when I think of the grace of God that He bestowed on you by your union with Messiah Jesus. I thank Him that you have been made so rich by your life in Him. You have been endowed with a wealth of inspired utterance, with a wealth of spiritual illumination, which is in itself conclusive evidence of the truth of my testimony concerning the Messiah. Hence you lag behind other churches in no divine

gift, while you wait and watch to see the cleaving heavens reveal our Lord Jesus the Messiah. He it is who shall keep you steadfast until that final consummation, so that none shall dare arraign you in the Great Day of our Lord Jesus the Messiah. True to His promise is God, He whose voice bade you enter into co-heirship with His Son, Jesus the Messiah, our Lord.

Since, then, you are in union with Him, I entreat you, my brothers, by the dear name of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, to be unanimous in the profession of your faith. Let there be no divisions among you: let unity be restored in purpose and in creed. This warning is not superfluous: I have been informed, my brothers, by members of Chloe's household, that there are factions among you. What I mean is this—you have adopted party-cries. One says, 'I am a partisan of Paul'—another, 'I of Apollos'—another, 'I of Kephas'—another, 'I of the Messiah.' What, has Messiah been parted into fragments? Paul—was *he* crucified for you? Did you, at your baptism, pledge yourselves to follow Paul? Not one of you did I baptise—I thank God now for that—except Crispus and Gaius. I may well thank Him, since now no one can say that in baptism you pledged yourselves to follow me!—yes, I did baptise also the household of Stephanas: besides these, I have no recollection of having baptised any one. It was, in fact, not to baptise that Messiah sent me forth on my mission, but to proclaim His Glad-tidings. That message, too, I declared unadorned with philosophic eloquence: I had no mind to refine away the special significance of 'The Cross of the Messiah.'

The Story of the Cross, in fact, is, in the eyes of those who are on the way to destruction, an absurdity: but in ours, since we are in the path of salvation, it is the manifestation of the power of God. Those who are 'on the way to destruction' include human philosophies: it stands written, 'I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF PHILOSOPHERS, AND THE UNDERSTANDING OF KEEN-WITTED MEN WILL I BRING INTO CONTEMPT.'—(*Isaiah* 29: 14). What, in God's sight, is the Greek philosopher?

—What is the Jewish rabbi?—What is the learned disputant of this our day? Has not God treated with the neglect due to its mere folly the philosophy of the world? When the world of intellect, with all its philosophy, had failed, baffled by God's wisdom, to attain to a true conception of God, then it was God's good pleasure to deliver those who now believe—how? By a proclamation which that world regards as utterly unphilosophical. It is distasteful to both classes; since the Jews persistently demand 'signs from heaven'; the Greeks are ever seeking for a 'philosophical theory of Ethics'; but we apostles come preaching a 'Messiah who has been crucified'—a conception from which Jews recoil with horror, and which seems to Greeks utterly unphilosophical. But to us who have heard God's call, Jews and Greeks alike, this Messiah embodies God's power (so meeting the Jews' craving for miracles), and God's wisdom (so meeting the Greeks' desire for philosophy). What seems to the latter unwisdom in God's design transcends all human wisdom; what seems to the former impotence in God's execution transcends all human might. Mark, my brothers, by what instruments God called you. Very few of the wise—wise with human wisdom—very few of the mighty, of the high-born few, have been bearers of the Call. Nay, God chose out the unwisdom of the world, that its success in regenerating humanity might put to shame the philosophies which had failed in the task: the strengthless ones of the world God chose out, that their success might put to shame the strong rulers who had failed. The lowly-born of the world, the things contemned, God chose them out—ay, and agencies whose very existence was unsuspected, that by their success he might show the futility of existing systems, that no human agency might, in the presence of God, boast of success. And so, not from man, but from God do you draw your life in Messiah Jesus—in Jesus who became for us God-given wisdom, our righteousness, our consecration, our ransom! So for us is fulfilled that Scripture, 'HE THAT TRIUMPHETH, LET HIM TRIUMPH IN THE LORD.'

II

I too, when I came to you, brothers, came with no transcendent eloquence or philosophy, as I proclaimed to you the mystic secret of God. I determined to make no display of knowledge before you, except of the Messiah—and of Him only as a crucified Messiah. Arrayed in no oratorical dignity did I appear to you, but in bodily weakness, in timidity—I fairly trembled with nervousness. My address, my proclamation, was not conveyed in plausible philosophic eloquence: no, it consisted in a flashing forth of the Spirit's energy, of the power of God. This was intentional, in order that your faith might rest, not on human philosophy, but on the power of God.

And yet for an audience of men of ripe understanding I have a higher teaching, a divine philosophy.¹ But it is not a philosophy which this world will recognise as such, no, nor the rulers of this world, who are on the point of passing into nothingness. No, what I utter is the wisdom of God, embodied in the Mystic Secret which has so long been hidden from view, yet which God designed, ages and ages ago, to lift us into the glory of His presence. Not one of the rulers of this world recognised it. Had they done so, never would they have crucified the Lord of Glory. No marvel that they missed it, for to this revelation apply these words, 'THINGS NO EYE HATH SEEN, NO EAR HATH HEARD, THINGS WHEREOF NO VISION EVER DAWNED ON HUMAN HEART—ALL THOSE THINGS WHICH GOD HATH MADE READY FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.'—(*Isaiah* 64:4). Yet to us did God unveil them by the agency of His Spirit. Yes, the Spirit can explore all things, even the abysmal depths of God's designs. Even man is inscrutable to his fellow-man: only the spirit that dwells in him knows his secrets. Even so the secrets of God none hath discerned save the Spirit of God. Well, we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit that is an effluence from God, given to us in order that we may appreciate the gifts lavished on us by God. Yes, it is of these high themes that I then discourse, not in the rhetoric

¹ Such as he unfolds in the letter to the Ephesians.

of the schools, in terms of human philosophy; but in terms learnt in the Spirit's school do I embody spiritual conceptions in spiritual language. Now, the unspiritual man cannot grasp the revelations of the Spirit of God. They are for him meaningless: he cannot comprehend them: they require the spiritual attitude for their appreciation. But the spiritual man can appreciate them all: yet of the truth of his convictions no unspiritual man can judge. He has pierced the veil of the Divine, so that the challenge of Scripture is met—'WHAT MAN KNOWETH THE HEART OF THE LORD, THAT HE SHOULD BE GUIDE TO HIM?'—(*Isaiah* 40: 13). We, I answer, do hold the secret of Messiah's heart.

III

Ah but, my brothers, I found it impossible, when I was with you, to talk to *you* as spiritual men. I had to address you as those in whom the fleshly nature predominated, in fact, as mere infants in the New Life in the Messiah. I had to rear you on milk, not on solid food, which indeed you could not have assimilated—nor can you now, for that matter, since you are unspiritual still. So long as jealousy and faction are rife among you, are you not unspiritual?—are you not living lives far from divine? So long as one of you persists in saying 'I am a partisan of Paul,' and another, 'I am of Apollos' party,' are you not very human? Why, what is Apollos?—what is Paul? They are but stewards through whose hands was dispensed the gift of your faith, each of them doing but the work that God assigned to him. My part was to plant the slip, that of Apollos to water it; but it was God who all the time was making it grow. The planter is nought, the waterer is nought: God, who makes it grow, is everything. Besides, both planter and waterer, so far from being rivals, are in this case one in aim. Each of them shall receive his special wage, according to the special work he has done. We, in fact, are fellow-labourers with God: you are God's tilth-land; or, to change the figure,

you are God's building. Directed by the grace of God, which was bestowed upon me, I, like some skilful master-builder, laid the foundation: another is now carrying on the structure. But let each man take heed how he does carry on this structure. As to the foundation, no one is empowered to lay any other than that which has been laid once for all, that is, the Messiahship of Jesus. Now, if a man proceeds to rear upon that foundation a structure of gold, silver, and costly marbles, or one of wood, having its gaps stopped with hay, and thatched with straw—the character of each man's work will have to be clearly shown. The Great Day shall make it plain; and the revealing agent is fire. Yes, what is the true quality of each man's work, that fire—nothing less—shall test. If any man's structure, which he has reared on the aforesaid foundation, stands the test, he shall receive his work's wage. If any one's structure shall be burnt to the ground, he shall thus forfeit his life's work, though he himself shall be rescued, yet only as one who is dragged out through the flames of a burning house. Do you not understand that your church is God's temple, that God's Spirit has His home in your midst? If any one makes a ruin of God's temple, God will make him a ruin; for God's temple is hallowed, and hallowed therefore are you. Ay, and it *may* be ruined by these follies of yours. Let no one delude himself:—if any one among you imagines himself versed in this world's philosophy, let him begin by recognising himself as the fool that he is, as the first step to the attainment of true wisdom. The wisdom of this world, in short, is folly in God's sight. To this refers that Scripture, 'HE WHO ENTRAPPETH THE WISE IN THEIR OWN CUNNING'—(*Job* 5: 13); and that other, 'THE LORD KNOWETH THE REASONINGS OF THE WISE, HOW VAIN THEY ARE.'—(*Psalms* 94: 11). Therefore, let no one pride himself on having this or that human leader. Why, *all* things are yours—Paul, Apollos, Kephas, the world, life, death, the immediate present, the far future—*all* are your heritage: but *you*—you belong to no human leader: you are Messiah's; and Messiah is God's.

IV

The only right estimate of Apollos, myself, and the rest, is that we are but servants of the Messiah, stewards of the mystic secrets of God. Here on earth, I grant you, the conduct of stewards is scrutinised at the audits, to prove each one's fidelity to his trust. But, as to my being called to account by *you*, or at any human bar, that is a matter of perfect indifference to me. Not that I constitute myself my own judge. I am not conscious of any dereliction of duty, it is true: still, I do not on that account claim to be exonerated of blame. But I do say that the only one who has a right to judge me is the Lord. Therefore do not risk any premature judgment, ere the Coming of the Lord. He shall flash light upon the secrets now shrouded in darkness: he shall lay bare the purposes of men's hearts; and then shall the due praise be awarded to each of us from God.

These figures—of the labourer, the builder—my brothers, I have, to make my point clear to you, applied to myself and to Apollos, in order that you may learn not to assume a rivalry between us for which you can produce no written authority, and may not be inflated with the self-conceit of partisanship for one of us as against the other. For—I challenge any faction-leader—who allows you any superiority? What gift or grace do you possess which you did not first receive? If you did but receive it, why pride yourself as on something for which you are indebted to no one? O, now you Corinthians are like sated guests at a feast—now you have grown rich—now have become kings in the Kingdom of Heaven, and are quite independent of me! Ah, would that you had really gained your thrones in the Kingdom, that I too might share your royalty! We apostles seem far from that as yet. It seems to me as if God has exposed His apostles to public view, like the doomed wretches who close a triumphal procession—that we, like them, have been exposed in the amphitheatre before the eyes of the world, ay, of angels as well as of men! *We* maintain the old crude absurdities in Messiah's cause; *your* faith in Messiah is quite a philosophy. *We* feel ourselves poor weaklings; *you*

are strong enough to stand alone: *you* are men of distinction; *we* are abject outcasts. We have never known your privileges: from the outset to this day we have been suffering hunger, suffering thirst: we have no decent clothing: we are victims of mob-violence, we are homeless men: we have to toil hard, working with our own hands. Men rail on us, we bless them: men persecute us, we meekly bear it: men slander us, we gently plead with them. We have sunk so low as to be the mere off-scouring of society, the very refuse of humanity. So has it been from the first, and so is it still with us. A stinging comparison this!—yet it is not to put you to shame that I so write: no, it is to warn you, as my children, my dear ones. Ay, though you have enough, and more than enough, of men who would drag you to this or that school of Messianic theology, few, few loving fathers have you—you have but me. Yes, it was I who begat you into the life of the Messiah, of Jesus, by means of the Glad-tidings that I brought you. I beseech you then, follow my example. To ensure this, I have sent to you Timotheus: he is my dear son, loyal in fealty to our Lord; and he shall remind you of the path that I trod in union with our Messiah, with which my teaching in every church still accords. But do not infer from this that I am not coming myself. I know that there are some who have assumed an arrogant tone, insinuating that I dare not come to you. Nay, but come I will to you full soon, if it be the Lord's will. Then will I test—not how great is the talk of these arrogant interlopers, but—how great is their supernatural power. For, in the last resort, the Kingdom of God depends, not on talk, but on supernatural power. Choose!—am I to come to you armed with the rod of chastisement, or with love, and with a spirit of gentleness?

V

Good cause there is for chastisement. There is incest among you—it is absolutely notorious—incest so unnatural that it does not exist even amongst the Gentiles, the horror of

a man's living in intercourse with his own father's wife! And you—instead of being crushed with grief, till the wretch who has perpetrated this thing has been uprooted from your midst—have been actually puffed up with self-satisfaction! As to *my* attitude, there shall be no mistake. Absent in body though I am, with my spirit I am even now present among you. I have decided the fate of the man who has consummated this crime, as though I were even now on the spot. You are to meet in solemn congregation—my spirit will be there, armed with the supernatural might of our Lord Jesus—and you are in the name of our Lord Jesus to deliver over that man into the hands of Satan, that he may blast the sinner's body, so that at least his spirit may be delivered in that Great Day of the Appearing of our Lord Jesus. This 'liberty' on which you pride yourselves is infamous—infamous! What, are you blind to the fatal force of example?—do you not know that it takes but a little leaven to leaven a whole batch? Cleanse out every trace of this old leaven, so that, free in profession as you are from leaven of sin, you may really be throughout unadulterated. You are bound to be, since

Passover Hymn

Messiah is our Passover-lamb: He has been slain.
Therefore let us keep His unending Passover-feast,
Contaminated by no old leaven,
By no leaven of vice and wickedness,
But feeding on the unleavened bread
Of sincerity and truth.

I wrote to you in my previous letter to hold no intercourse with licentious men. *Of course* I was not referring to the licentious of the heathen world, nor to its overreachers, its extortioners, its idolaters, in which case you would have actually to forswear human society. But now—I have set it down plainly this time—I say you are to hold no intercourse with **any** so-called member of your community who is either

licentious, or an overreacher, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner. No, you must not even eat in company with such a man. As for the outside world, what commission have I to sit in judgment on it? It is your place—is it not?—to take cognisance of the conduct of your fellow-members. The outside world it is for God to judge. In any case, your present duty is clear—‘THRUST OUT THE WICKED ONE FROM AMONG YOU.’—(*Deuteronomy* 22: 24).

VI

This mention of *judging* brings me to a very practical question. Is it possible that any one of your community has the hardihood, when involved in a business dispute with a fellow-member of the church, to go to law in a court of the unbelievers, instead of bringing it before a court of the church? Do you not know that believers shall, in the Kingdom of God, sit in judgment on the world? If, then, the world is destined to be judged at your bar, are you unfit to be trusted with the decision of the merest trifles? Do you not know that we are to sit in judgment upon angels?—how much more, then, on mere mundane matters! Nay rather, if you must have tribunals for matters of everyday life, the meanest member of your own church is good enough for you to appoint to preside over them. I want to make you ashamed of yourselves. Have things come to such a pass, that there is not to be found amongst you so much as one man of sound common sense qualified to arbitrate between brother and brother, but that brother must be going to law with brother, and that too before heathen tribunals? This at least is at once clear, that it is a veritable dwarfing of your moral stature to have lawsuits between yourselves at all. Why do you not rather submit to wrong? Why not rather put up with being defrauded? On the contrary, it is you, *you* who are committing wrong, who are defrauding—ay, are so treating your brothers! What? Do you not know that unjust men shall not inherit the Kingdom

of God? Do not delude yourselves!—neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor sensualists, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor overreachers, nor drunkards, nor foul-mouthed men, nor extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God. Such vile things used some of you to be!—but you have washed yourselves clean of these pollutions, but you have been consecrated, but you have been pronounced righteous, by trust in the name of your Lord, Jesus the Messiah, and by the influence of the Spirit of our God.

I proceed to deal with your letter in detail. ‘All things,’ you say, ‘are now (by virtue of my non-subjection to the Mosaic Law) permissible for me.’ Possibly; but it does not follow that all things are good for me. Permissible all things may be for me; but, first, I am not going to risk being enslaved by any appetite: secondly—the fact is, all indulgences of the senses do not stand on the same footing. As to mere articles of food, they were created to be eaten: they and the belly are alike destined to dissolution. But the body—*that* was not created for fornication, but for our Lord’s service, and our Lord gave Himself for our bodies. Now, as God raised our Lord from the dead, so will He also raise us by His own power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of our Messiah? Shall I, then, presume to take the members of Messiah, and make them members of a harlot? Never! Nor am I overstating the case: you surely must know that the man who is knit to the harlot is thereby one body with her!—‘they twain shall be one flesh,’ is the declaration of Scripture. And, on the other hand, he who is knit to the Lord is thereby one spirit with Him. Shrink away from fornication. Broadly speaking, the sins which a man may commit leave the body uncontaminated. Fornication is the one exception—the sinner thereby blasts his own body. Do you not know that your body is the shrine of the Holy Spirit which dwells in you, and which you have direct from God? You are not your own, you have been bought, and the price paid down. Ah then. glorify God in your body!

VII

With respect to the questions raised in your letter:—

1. *Relations of married people.* Well, the ideal state is abstention from marital intercourse. Still, as a safeguard against the prevailing unchastity, let each husband still keep his own wife, and each wife her own husband. Let each husband render to the wife the marriage-due, and, correspondingly, the wife to the husband. The wife has not undisputed control over her own body: the husband has his rights. Similarly, the husband has not undisputed control over his body: the wife has her rights. Do not rob one another of those rights, unless indeed it be by mutual consent, and then only temporarily, in order that your prayers may be undistracted; then afterwards resume conjugal relations, that Satan may not keep tempting you, owing to your lack of self-control. All that I have said is to be understood as matter of concession, not of injunction. Still, as a matter of preference, I could wish that all had my own powers of self-control: but each man has his own special gift from God; in one it takes this form, in another that.

2. *As to unmarried persons and widows.* I incline to say that the ideal state for them is to remain in their present condition—like mine, in fact. Still, if they cannot control their desires, by all means let them marry: it is better to marry than to have a fire ever smouldering within them. But

3. *To those who are already married* I give a clear charge, not now on my own responsibility, but by the Lord's inspiration:—a wife must not separate from her husband. If, however, a separation have actually taken place, let her either remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. So also, a husband must not divorce his wife.

4. To those involved in the next question, I speak by no revelation, but on my own private judgment:—if any member of the church has a wife who has not embraced the faith, and she be quite content to live with him, he is not to divorce her. So too, if a wife has a husband who has not embraced the faith and he be quite content to live with her, let her not divorce

her husband. For the unbelieving husband is consecrated in his wife's consecration, and the unbelieving wife is consecrated in that of the believer. Were it otherwise, your children would be uncleansed, but, as it is, they are consecrated. If, on the other hand, it is the unbeliever who is determined on a separation, let the separation take place. Neither brother nor sister is fettered in such a case. God has invited us to live a life of peace, not of wrangling. What reasonable expectation have you, the wife, of saving your unbelieving husband? What reasonable expectation have you, the husband, of saving your unbelieving wife?

Only, let each member go on living in the same condition which the Lord originally allotted to him, and in which he was when he heard God's call. This, in fact, is the rule I am laying down in all the churches. Was any man already circumcised when the Call came to him?—let him not efface the sign. Was any man uncircumcised when he heard the Call?—let him not get himself circumcised. Circumcision is absolutely unimportant, uncircumcision is as unimportant: keeping the commandments of God is all-important. In whatever condition of life each one heard God's call, in that let him remain. Were you a bondman when the Call came?—let not that trouble you. Even if you get the opportunity of obtaining your freedom, keep to your present condition by preference. The man who, though a bondman, has been called to the New Life in God, is the Lord's freed-man; and, conversely, the free man who has been so called is the Lord's bondman. You have been bought, and the price paid down: do not you become slavish followers of any human leader. Let each remain, my brothers, waiting upon God, in the condition in which he heard God's call.

5. *Unmarried daughters under parental control*—with respect to these I have no revelation of our Lord's will. I simply give my opinion, as one who, by our Lord's mercy, has been faithful to his trust. Well then, my view is, that, owing to the imminence of distressful times, it is decidedly advisable for a man to

remain in his present condition. Are you united to a wife?—do not try to get a separation. Are you unfettered by the marriage-tie?—then do not seek a wife. Still, even if you have married, you have committed no sin. So also, if the virgin marries, she has committed no sin. But such persons will find that these ties make their affliction (in times of persecution) more poignant; and this I am anxious to spare you. And this I do say, brothers; the margin of time left before the Second Coming is very narrow. It follows, that they who have wives should be as though they had them not; that they who weep should be as though they wept not; those who rejoice as though they rejoiced not; those who buy goods as though they got them not in full possession; those who enjoy this world's advantages, as though they never gave themselves up to the enjoyment of them; for this mere outward show—and the world around you is nothing more—is fast fleeting away. I want you to be free from all preoccupation. The unmarried man can be absorbed in his duties to our Lord: he has but to think, 'How shall I please my Lord?' The married man is absorbed in duties relating to the world: he has to think, 'How shall I please my wife?' hence, concentration of purpose is impossible for him. So too of the wife and the virgin:—the unmarried woman can be absorbed in her duties to her Lord: she has but to think, 'How may I be consecrated both in body and in spirit?' But the wedded woman must be absorbed in her duties to the world, thinking, 'How shall I please my husband?' I am giving these hints entirely for your own benefit. I have no thought of trammelling your freedom: I want to help you to live a decorous life, a life very near to the Lord, without distractions.

Still, if any father begins to think that he may be treating his maiden daughter unhandsomely, if she be near the verge of the marriageable age, and if there are good reasons for the proposed match, let him follow his own kindly impulse; he commits no sin—let the maid and her suitor marry. On the other hand, in the case of a father whose mind is definitely

made up, who is unembarrassed by circumstances over which he has no control, and who has power to enforce his decision, and has passed this sentence in the session of his heart, 'I will keep my daughter unmarried'—he will be acting rightly too. In short, he who gives his daughter in marriage acts well, though he who refrains from so doing acts better.

A wife is bound to her husband so long as he lives; but after her husband has slept death's sleep, she is free to marry whom she pleases, always provided he be a believer. Still, she is a happier woman if she remains a widow, according to my judgment—and I have, I think, the Spirit of God as truly as any of *you*.

VIII

6. *Food which has been offered at heathen sacrifices.* On this point you seem to think that you need no advice. 'We all possess spiritual illumination,' you say—I am quite aware of it. This 'illumination' blows up the wind-bag of empty self-sufficiency: it is Love that builds up the solid structure of the New Life. If any man imagine himself to be 'illuminated' on any subject, I can only say that he does not yet recognise anything as he rightly should recognise it: but if a man loves God, that man is recognised by Him.

Well, with respect to the eating of idol-sacrifices, we all know that, as our hymn expresses it,

Confession Hymn

Nowhere in the universe has an idol any true being.

There is no God except the One.

Yea, though there be gods, so styled,

Be they in heaven, or be they on earth,—

Gods enow, and lords enow, good sooth!—

Yet for us there is *one* God, the Father,

Who is the Source of all things, who is our Final End,

And one Lord, Jesus the Messiah,

Through whom are all things upheld, yea, ourselves
through Him.

Ay, but *all* believers do not possess this 'illumination' that you boast; on the contrary, some people, having been all their lives familiarised with the idea of the idol's real existence, look on the food as an idol-sacrifice while they eat it. Thus their conscience, tenderly scrupulous as it is, is being guilt-stained. True, what we eat will not affect our standing before God. If we abstain, we shall not be prejudiced in His sight: if we eat, we shall enjoy no advantage. But O, beware lest these 'rights' of yours become an obstruction to the progress of the scrupulous. If any such person sees you (who possess this 'illumination') reclining at the feast in an idol's temple, may not the conscience of such a man be, in spite of his scruples, so buttressed up as to lead him to eat what to him are still idol-sacrifices? Ay, and so your scrupulous brother is being ruined through your 'illumination'—that brother for whom Messiah died! In this way, by transgressing against your brothers, I mean, by persistently shocking their conscience, tender as it is, you are transgressing against our Messiah. Therefore, if what I eat obstructs my brother's spiritual progress, I declare I will never eat flesh, never!—that I may not set an obstruction in the path of my brother.

IX

I have to meet two protests—1, the protest of your intellect, which objects to curtailment of its 'rights'; 2, the protest of your appetite, which objects to curtailment of pleasures not sinful. My answer to the first is my own example. Am *I* not emancipated from the Mosaic Law? Am I not a true apostle? Have I not with my own eyes seen Jesus our Lord? Is not your life in union with our Lord my work? If in the estimation of some others I am not a true apostle, in yours at least I am. Your existence as a church, your life in our Lord, is the actual seal set on my mission-work—that is my defence to those who challenge my claim. Well then, have we not—I and my fellows—a *right* to free maintenance by our converts? Have we not as good a right to take with us on our journeys from

church to church our wives, believers as they are, as have the other apostles, our Lord's brothers, for instance, and Kephass? Or have we alone—Barnabas and I—no right to claim a dispensation from manual labour? Why, what soldier in a campaign has to find himself in food? Who that plants a vineyard is debarred from eating of the produce of it? Who that pastures a flock is forbidden to partake of the milk of that flock? But why appeal to human and social relations only? Does not the Law too lay down the same principle? Certainly!—in Moses' Law it stands written, 'THOU SHALT NOT MUZZLE AN OX WHILE HE IS TREADING OUT THE CORN.'—(*Deuteronomy* 25: 4). Tell me not that God is here showing His care for oxen only! Does He not say it mainly—wholly—for the sake of us men? Most certainly it was written for our sakes, on the eternal principle that the ploughman ought, while ploughing, and the thresher, while threshing, to be upborne by the hope of having a share of the harvest. If I have sown spirit-seed in your hearts, is it asking too much that I should reap from you a bare maintenance for my body? If others take care to get their share of 'their rights' from you, have *I* not a still better claim? But—and this is my point—*I have never exercised this 'right' of mine*. No, I endure every extremity, rather than oppose any hindrance whatever to the spread of the Glad-tidings of our Messiah. But as to my *right*!—need I remind you that the priests who perform the temple-services receive their maintenance from the temple-resources, that they whose post is beside the altar of sacrifice get their portion of the victims offered thereon? Precisely so did our Lord ordain that those who publish His Glad-tidings should get at least a bare living from the Glad-tidings. But, for all this, I, personally, have never availed myself of this right. I am not writing in this strain to prepare the way for my doing so. No! better for me to die than that—no man shall prove this my boast an empty vaunt! I proclaim the Glad-tidings: but *that* is not matter of boasting for me. An overmastering constraint forces me to it. Ay, woe to me, if I proclaim not the Glad-tidings! If I do

this with cheerful willingness, I find my reward therein; but, were it done reluctantly, I should have to do it still, like a slave to whom his lord has entrusted the steward's office. What then is the reward I find therein? Just this—the consciousness of giving to men Glad-tidings that cost them nothing—the consciousness that *I* take no selfish advantage of 'my rights' in connection with the Glad-tidings.

But I not only waive my rights, I submit to restrictions. Free and independent though I really am of all sections of religionists, I have made myself a veritable bondman to each and all, so as to win the most possible for Jesus. I met the Jews on the footing of a fellow-Jew, so as to win the Jews—yes, I (who am really emancipated from the Law) met those who subject themselves to the Mosaic Law, as one of themselves,¹ so as to gain the devotees of the Law. Those unfettered by Mosaic Law I met as one unfettered like themselves—not, of course, unfettered by God's law; nay, rather, but closer bound in Messiah's law—so as to win those who are not under the Mosaic Law. Men of tender religious scruples I met as a man who could sympathise with tender religious scruples—so as to win the scrupulous. To all men I assumed all characters, so as by all means to gain some. All this I do for the sake of the Glad-tidings, so that I may have a real part and share in them.

And have *you* no motives for similar abnegation of self? Have you not observed how in the race-course *all* the competitors keep racing on?—and yet of them only one can win the prize. With like earnestness do *you* keep racing on, with the one aim of *grasping your prize*—not of standing out for your 'rights.' Once more, every competitor in those athletic contests practises continual self-denial. They do it to win a fading wreath—can *we* not practise self-denial (of our 'rights') to win an

¹ Thus submitting to synagogue discipline, exercised in his case mercilessly; for example, in the infliction five times of the 'forty stripes save one.' Without such conformity he could not have entered the synagogues to preach Christ there, with which he commenced his mission-work in every place he visited.

unfading wreath? I, at all events, mean to run *my* race with that goal as my one object: I am a boxer who deal my blows at anything but the empty air of my 'rights.' Nay, I brow-beat my own animal nature (you are inclined to be champions for yours), and treat it, not as my master, but as my slave—lest, by any chance, after acting as the herald of the lists who bids others enter, I might find my own self disqualified from competing.

X

As to the second objection, that of the appetite:—my brothers, I want you to bear in mind that my Israelite forefathers all gathered under that cloud-banner; in one host they marched through the Red Sea; and by this their baptism in cloud and sea they pledged themselves to follow Moses: they all ate the same spirit-food, they all drank the same spirit-drink, for they drank of the outflow from the spirit-rock which still attended their march—and that rock was the Messiah. Yet, in spite of these privileges, with the vast majority of them God was displeased, as is shown by the fact that their corpses were left strewn in the wilderness. Now all these experiences should serve as warnings to us, deterring us from craving for what is harmful, as they did. Ay, do not you palter with idolatry, as did some of them, as is told in the record, 'The people sat down to eat and drink' (the thing *you* see no risk in)—'*and rose up thence for idol-dances.*'—(*Exodus* 32: 6). And let us not, by frequenting those scenes of licentiousness, be lured into fornication, as were some of them, when there fell dead in one day three-and-twenty thousand. Neither let us try the Lord's patience (as by seeing how near you can go to sin), as some of them tried it, who were destroyed by the serpents. Neither let us murmur at restrictions, as some of them murmured, and were destroyed by the Destroying Angel. Now these things which happened to them should serve as warnings to us. They were, in fact, put on record as admonitions to us, whom the last great days of the world's existence

have overtaken.¹ Therefore let the man who imagines himself to be standing so securely see to it lest he fall. And you *can* avoid falling; for, first, no temptation has overtaken you but such as man may well withstand; secondly, God is true to His promise: He will not allow you to be tempted beyond your power of resistance; nay, along with each temptation He will provide the door of escape, so that you may be able to endure.

The conclusion, my dear, dear friends, is this—keep as far away as you can from idolatry. I am appealing to your reason and good sense. Weigh this argument yourselves:—the Cup of the Blessing, on which we invoke God's benediction, is the medium by which we share the blood of Messiah, is it not? That bread which we break, it is the medium by which we share Messiah's body, is it not? We are, however numerous, one body, just as the bread is one loaf; for, you know, we all share the one loaf. Again, look at the case of Israel (the Israelites by descent, I mean): all of them who eat of the sacrifice are sharers in the altar, are they not? What is my point, then, (since, by parity of reasoning, the same conclusion must apply to heathen sacrifices)? Am I implying that a thing sacrificed to an idol is intrinsically affected thereby?—that an idol is a real existence? No, but this—the sacrifices that heathens offer, they offer, *in effect, to demons*, and not to God. I cannot consent to your becoming sharers in the demons' feast. It is out of the question that you should drink both of the cup of our Lord, and of the cup of demons. It will never do for you to be guests of our Lord at the same time that you are guests of demons. Are we to challenge the Lord's jealousy by offering Him demons as His rivals?—what, are we so strong as to defy Him?

Now you may see what I meant by saying, 'All things may be permissible for me; but all things are not good for me.' All things *are* permissible; but not all things build up our spiritual life. Let no one make his own interests his one aim,

¹ So Stanley. Another interpretation is, 'who stand at the meeting of the Ages—the end of the Old Order, and the beginning of the New.'

but rather his neighbour's interests. For a practical rule—everything sold in the meat-market eat, refraining from asking questions to satisfy scruples of conscience; for 'TO THE LORD BELONG THE EARTH AND ALL ITS STORE.'—(*Psalm* 24: 1). Again, if any unbeliever invites you to his house, and you are disposed to go, eat of everything set before you, refraining from asking any questions to satisfy scruples of conscience. But, supposing some scrupulous brother says to you, 'This is temple-offered meat,' then do not think of eating, on his account who so indicated it, on account, in fact, of these scruples of conscience. By 'conscience' I mean, not your own, but your scrupulous neighbour's—for of course it would be absurd that my own conscience should submit its liberty of *thought* to the judgment of another man's conscience. If I partake of my food with thanksgiving, I am not to be calumniated for eating that for which I give God thanks. So then, whether you are eating, or drinking, or whatever you are doing, do all things to the glory of God. Do not make yourselves hindrances in the path either of Jews or Greeks, or of God's church. This is my own principle—to try to make everybody happy, not to aim at my own interests, but at those of the great mass of men, that they may be saved. Do you follow my example, as I do that of the Messiah?

XI

7. As to the next question, that of *being covered during worship*. Here I must say, 'Well done!' for the assurance that 'you remember me in all things, and are observing the rules that I laid down for your guidance.' Well, I want you to grasp the principle involved—the head of each man is Messiah: the head of the woman is the man: the head of Messiah is God. Every man who, while praying in public or preaching, keeps a covering on his head, is doing dishonour to his head; but every woman who, while praying in public or preaching, keeps her head uncovered, is doing dishonour to her head—she could not be worse if she were shaven. In fact, if a woman

insists on being unveiled like a man, let her also wear her hair cut short like a man! But as it is a mark of infamy for a woman to be shorn or shaven,¹ let her keep her veil on. But a man is under no obligation to have his head veiled. He represents 'the likeness (and so, the glory) of God'; but the woman reflects but the glory of man. Man's creation, you know, was not a consequence of woman's, but woman's of that of man since it was not for woman's sake that man was created, but woman for man's. For this reason each woman ought to wear that symbol of his authority on her head, for fear of the eyes of the angels. Still, it must always be remembered that, as woman has not life in our Lord to the exclusion of man, neither has man to the exclusion of woman. For, as woman originally derived her being from man, so does man still derive his through the instrumentality of woman, and all derive from God. Bring your own common-sense to bear on the question—is it decent for a woman to be offering public prayer to God with her head unveiled? Do not our own natural instincts teach us that, while it is unmanly for a man to wear long hair, for a woman to wear long hair is womanly? Her hair is God's gift to her, a natural veil. However, it is not a question to be settled by mere argument. If any person seems disposed to quarrel with my decision, let the sufficient answer be, 'Your view is against all usage, alike of our own and of all other churches of God.'

And, while I am on this subject of your church-meetings, there is one feature with respect to which I cannot say, 'Well done!' I understand that your gatherings are so conducted as to tend, not to your improvement, but to your deterioration. In the first place, I hear that, when you assemble in congregation, there are cliques among you; and there is, I fear, some foundation for the story. Well, if there must be these exclusive parties among you, the men of sterling character will be conspicuous by their abstention from them. Again, when, as I said, you gather on these occasions, it is impossible to eat the

¹ It was inflicted as a punishment on adulteresses.

Lord's Supper. Why? because each of you in that meal is clutching at his own supper. So little is it a common meal, that, while one is positively hungry, another is actually drunk! What, have you no houses in which to satisfy mere hunger and thirst? Do you presume to treat God's church with contempt?—to humiliate the poorer fellow-members? What am I to say to you? Am I to say, in this matter, 'Well done?' No, I say, 'Most ill done!' The order of procedure, as *I* received it from our Lord, and as I delivered it to you, was—as your ritual-chant has it—

Hymn of the Lord's Supper

The Lord Jesus

On that same night whereon he was betrayed,

Took bread: and, when he had given thanks,

he brake it,

And said, 'This is my body, which is for you:

This do ye, in remembrance of me.'

So likewise the cup, after supper was done,

Saying, 'This cup is the New Covenant,

Ratified in my blood.

This do, as often as ye drink, in remembrance of me.'

Yes, as often as you are eating this bread, and are drinking this cup, you are proclaiming the fact of our Lord's death, and so you will continue doing till He comes the second time. It follows, that whoever habitually eats the bread and drinks the cup of the Lord in a manner dishonourable to Him, will become responsible for the wounding of the body, for the spilling of the blood, of our Lord. No, let each one scrutinise his conduct, and so eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks is eating and drinking a sentence upon himself, if he does not recognise the presence of the Body.

It is through these irregularities that many among you are now ailing and sickly, and not a few are sleeping the sleep of death. If we recognised our own condition, we should not be

thus judged. This judgment comes to us as a discipline from the Lord, to save us from being involved in the final condemnation of the world.

Therefore, my brothers, when you gather together for that meal, wait for one another. If any one is hungry, let him first take a meal at home. Thus you will not, by your meetings, bring judgment upon yourselves.

As to other matters of procedure, I will regulate them when I visit you.

XII

8. *As to the relative estimation and exercise of the gifts of the Spirit:*—With respect to these, my brothers, I want you to have clear conceptions. You know that, when you were heathens, you used to be swept along by impulses beyond your own control, in the orgies of those dumb idols. But there is no parallel between those frenzies and the breathings of the Spirit: and therefore I must impress upon you, that no one who speaks rapt in the Spirit of God can cry, ‘Accursed is Jesus!’¹ On the other hand, no one can in his rapture cry, ‘Our Lord is Jesus!’ except he be possessed by the Spirit.

Now there are various kinds of Gifts, but the bestowing Spirit is the same. There are various forms of service to our Lord, but our Lord is the same. There are varieties of effects; but the same God is there, who is actuating them all in all who display them. Now, mark, it is for the benefit of the church that the manifestation of the Spirit is bestowed on this or that person. On one is bestowed through the channel of the Spirit philosophic eloquence; to another comes, in accordance with the same Spirit’s workings, the utterance of spiritual illumination; to another, borne on the breathings of the same Spirit, comes faith; to another, gifts of healing, in the power of one Spirit still; to another, energies of supernatural power; to

¹ It has been suggested that some, in a professed rapture-trance, cried ‘Jesus is Anathema!’—perhaps a misapplication of Deuteronomy 21: 23, quoted in Galatians 3: 13.

another, inspired oratory; to another, the faculty of detecting the truth or falsity of any inspiration; to another, varieties of 'Tongues'; to another, the power to interpret Tongues:—but, in all these, it is one and the same Spirit that is the energising source. He allots, according to His will, His gifts to this and to that man.

To take an illustration:—the body is one whole: it has many organs; yet all these organs of the body, multifarious as they are, comprise but the one body: so is it with Messiah. For we, enfolded by the one Spirit, became by baptism incorporated into one body—one, mark you, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether bondmen or freemen. At one fountain-spirit we were all caused to drink. Well now, the body is not one organ, but many. Suppose the foot were to cry, 'Since I am not the hand, I am no part of the body!' would that constitute it no part of the body? If the ear were to say, 'Since I am not the eye, I am no part of the body!' would that constitute it no part of the body? Suppose the whole body were one eye, what would become of the sense of hearing? If the whole body were hearing, what would become of the sense of smell? But, as things are, God has placed the several organs in the body according to His own discretion. Suppose they were all blended into one organ, how could the body be said to exist? No, as things are, we find many organs, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'Need of thee have I none!' nor, again, the head to the feet, 'Need of you have I none!' Quite the contrary: those very organs which might seem to have least influence are really indispensable. Those parts of the body which we look upon as the more ignoble, these we ennoble with more beautiful clothing. Our ungraceful parts, in fact, are adorned with more special grace, whereas our graceful parts need no adorning. God, in fact, has made a composite whole of the body, assigning special honour to the part which naturally lacks it, so that there may be no divided interests in the body, and that its various organs may be united in solicitous care for each other's welfare. And accordingly, if

one organ be in pain, all the organs sympathise with it. On the other hand, if one organ be arrayed in beauty, all the organs share its pleasure.

Well, then, you are collectively Messiah's Body, and are individually His members. Consequently, you have your several functions—God has placed in His church in the first rank His apostles; in the second, inspired preachers; in the third, expounders; after that come those who possess supernatural powers, then those who have gifts of healing, gifts for helping the weak, gifts for church-administration; lastly, varieties of 'tongues.' Can all be apostles?—can all be inspired preachers?—can all be expounders?—can all be marvel-workers?—have all gifts of healing?—can all speak with 'tongues'?—can all interpret them? It is for you emulously to seek the higher gifts. Nay, but none of them should represent the summit of your aspirations—I now point you to a path that leads to heights beyond all heights:—

XIII

Hymn of Love

Though with all tongues of men I speak, yea, of angels,
 And have not Love,
 I have but become clanging brass or clashing cymbal.
 Yea, though I have utterance inspired,
 Though I fathom all mystic secrets, have full illumination,
 Though I have utter faith, such as might move mountains
 from their seats,
 And have not Love,
 Nothing am I.
 And though I dole away in charity all my goods,
 And though I yield up my body to a death of fire,
 And have not Love,
 Nothing it availeth me.
 Love is long-forbearing, is all kindness:
 Love knows not jealousy.

Love does not parade her gifts, swells not with self-conceit, she
flouts not decency:
She grasps not at her rights, refuses to take offence, has no
memory for injuries.
She exults not over wrong triumphant, she shows glad
sympathy with Truth.
All tolerance is she, all trustfulness, all hope, all strong
endurance.

Love's flower-petals never fall.

Eloquence inspired—for this there shall be no use:

Tongues—they shall be hushed:

Illumination—for this there shall be no use.

Yes, partial is that our illumination, partial our inspiration:
But when cometh the perfect, for the partial there shall be no
use.

When I was a child, as a child I wont to talk;

As a child I felt, as a child I reasoned;

But now that I am grown to man, outworn for me are the
things of the child.

Yea, we see as yet the Vision glassed in a mirror—it is a dark
riddle—

But then face to face shall we gaze.

Now my knowledge comes from seeing but a part;

But then shall I understand, as fully as I am understood,

So then these abide unperishing—Faith, Hope, Love,

These three Gifts alone:

But chiefest of these is Love.

XIV

Let Love be the prize for which you run: still, by all means
continue to covet the gifts of the Spirit—inspired eloquence
by preference. I say this, because he who talks with a Tongue
is talking, not to men, but to God, since no man can under-
stand him. Rapt in the Spirit, he is uttering mystic secrets.
But the inspired preacher is talking to human beings: his
utterances tend to their spiritual progress, their encouragement,

their consolation. He who talks with a Tongue may be advancing his own spiritual progress; but the inspired preacher is advancing that of the church. I have no objection to your all possessing the Gift of Tongues; but I had much rather you were inspired preachers. The inspired preacher, in fact, is superior to him who talks with Tongues; unless, indeed, the latter adds a running interpretation, in order that the church may receive spiritual advancement. To take my own case—suppose *I*, my brothers, come to you talking with Tongues, what benefit shall I bring you, if my utterance impart no unveiling of the unseen, no spiritual illumination, no inspired address, no exposition? To take an illustration—there are instruments which, though inanimate, actually speak, as the flute or the harp; yet if they mark no distinction between the notes, how is the air performed on flute or harp to be recognised? Nay, if even in the trumpet's blast there be any uncertainty, who will make ready for fight? Your case is similar: if through the Tongue you do not utter intelligible language, how is any meaning to be attached to what you say? You might as well be talking to the winds. There are many varieties, it may well be, of languages in the world, as these Tongues of yours, and not one of them is meaningless. Still, if I do not know the significance of a particular language, my speech will seem, to him who speaks it, a mere jargon, and his will seem a mere jargon to me. Accordingly, do you, since you are so prone to covet spirit-visitations, seek that you may be rich in what shall help to build up the fabric of the church. Therefore, let him who talks with a Tongue ask God to enable him to give a concurrent interpretation. If I am praying in a Tongue, my spirit is engaged in prayer, but my intelligence is simply barren. What, then, is my conclusion? This—I will by all means pray in the Spirit's rapture, but I will also pray with my intelligence. I will sing in the Spirit's rapture, but I will sing with my intelligence also. Otherwise, if you are praising God in the Spirit's rapture only, how is he who occupies the position of the uninspired to add his 'Amen!'

to your thanksgiving, when he does not understand what you say? Your thanksgiving is admirable in itself, but your fellow-believer is not thereby built up in the faith. I myself am subject to this ecstasy more than all of you put together—and I thank God for this evidence of His presence—but, for all that, I would rather, in a church-gathering, utter five words with my intelligence, so as to be teaching others as well, than five-score hundred in a Tongue!

My brothers, do not make yourselves little children in discernment. In vice continue to be mere babes, but in discernment develop into grown men. In the Law it stands written, 'WITH ALIEN TONGUES AND WITH FOREIGN LIPS WILL I SPEAK TO THIS NATION; YET EVEN SO THEY WILL NOT GIVE EAR UNTO ME, SAITH THE LORD.'—(*Isaiah* 28: 11, 12). This indicates that the Tongues are designed to serve as a supernatural sign, not to believers, but to unbelievers. Inspired preaching, on the other hand, is designed, not for unbelievers, but for believers. Suppose, now, the whole church to be holding a united meeting, and all, one after another, to be talking with tongues; if there come in uninspired or unbelieving persons, will they not say that you are raving? But if all, one after another, utter inspired speech, and there come in an unbelieving or uninspired person, one by one they convict him, one by one they probe his thoughts; the secrets of his heart are laid bare: and so, falling upon his face, he will pay homage to God, carrying away the tidings that God is really among you.

What, then, is the practical application of this to you? When you gather, one of you has ready a hymn, another a piece of exposition, another a revelation, another breaks into rhapsody of the Tongue, another is prepared to give an interpretation of it. Let all be conducted with a view to the spiritual advancement of the church. If any wish to talk in a Tongue, let two only, or at most three such be allowed at each meeting—not simultaneously, but in turn: there must also be one who furnishes the interpretation. If no one qualified to interpret

be present, let the rhapsodist be silent at the church-meeting: let him talk to himself and to God. Inspired speakers are to speak two or three at a meeting; and let those who have the gift of discernment of inspiration then exercise it. If, during an address, a revelation comes to another of the audience, let the first speaker be silent. It is quite possible for all of you in turn to speak under inspiration, that all may from time to time receive instruction and exhortation. Do not say that such a regulation cannot be enforced. I tell you, the spirits of the inspired speakers *are* under the control of the inspired speakers. God, the source of their inspiration, is the author, not of confusion, but of peace. Moreover, the above is the practice in all the churches of believers.

9. *Women-speakers.* Your women must abstain from speaking at church-meetings. They are not authorised to speak in public: they must be submissive—just as, in fact, the Mosaic Law enjoins. If they desire to put any questions, let them ask their own husbands at home. It is not decent for a woman to be addressing a public meeting. ‘But,’ you say, ‘our women do speak and will speak’—what! are you the fountain-head whence God’s word issued? Are you the only community to which it came, that you should arrogate to yourselves independence?

Let whoever imagines that he is an inspired preacher, or endowed with spiritual gifts, give a proof of it by recognising the commandment of our Lord in what I now write to you. But if any one says, ‘I fail to perceive that,’ even let him rest complacent in the ignorance which simply proves non-inspiration.

The conclusion, my brothers, is this:—covet the gift of inspired preaching; still, do not wholly repress speaking with Tongues. Only, let everything be conducted with due regard to decorum and discipline.

XV

10. *As to the Resurrection of the Dead.* My brothers, I want

you to be under no misapprehension as to the purport of the Glad-tidings that I proclaimed to you, which also you received, and in which you still stand firm, and by means of which too you are being saved. I would have you recall in what terms I proclaimed it to you; for I presume you remember—unless indeed your belief was all in vain. Well, I delivered to you, as the cardinal feature of your faith, what was no invention of my own—I received it myself—that

The Resurrection Creed-chant

Messiah died for our sins,
According to the Scriptures.
He was buried, and was raised the third day,
According to the Scriptures.

He was seen by Kephas, then by the Twelve:
Thereafter was He seen by over five hundred brethren at one time,
Of whom most survive even until now;
But some have slept in death.
Thereafter was He seen by James,
Then by all His apostles.

And last of all, by me too, as it were by His child untimely-born, was He seen. Yes, I *am* the meanest of His apostles: I do not deserve to be called His apostle,—*I*, who once persecuted the church of God! It is all through the grace of God that I am what I am. His grace, which stooped to me, has not proved ineffectual; but I have toiled harder, far harder than all the rest—no, no, not I! It was the work of the grace of God which was helping me. Well, whether it were I or the other apostles who actually laboured most, this is the purport of our proclamation, this the central fact of your belief.

Now if the essential proclamation touching Messiah is, that **HE HAS RISEN FROM THE DEAD**, how comes it that some of you are asserting that there is no such thing as a resurrection of the dead? If resurrections from the dead ‘do not happen,’ it

must follow that Messiah has never risen. If Messiah has not risen, an empty sound then is our proclamation, a baseless fabric your faith. Nay more, we are in that case convicted of bearing false witness as to God's acts, in having given testimony *against* God, to the effect that He raised Messiah—whom He never did raise, if, in point of fact, 'dead men do not rise.' For, if dead people do not and cannot rise, Messiah has not risen either. And, if Messiah has not risen, your faith is an idle dream, you are still sunk in your sins. Ay, and those who have been hushed to sleep, in union with Messiah still, have been just annihilated! If our trust in Messiah is limited to this life only, most pitiable of all human beings are we! Ah, but, in real truth

Messiah *has* been raised from the dead!
and (since one resurrection disproves the impossibility)

Hymn of the Resurrection and Exaltation

He is the first sheaf of a great harvest,
Of all who have been hushed to death's sleep.
For, since through a man came death,
Through a Man too has come resurrection of
the dead.

For as, by their part in Adam, all are dying,
So, by their part in Messiah, shall all be quickened
into life.

Yet must each come in his befitting rank—
Messiah the first-fruits,
Then, in the Day of his Coming, Messiah's Own.
Then shall be the End,
When he surrenders the Kingdom to God, the
Father,
When he has brought to nought all other lordship, all
authority, all power:
For 'He must be King
Till God has thrust all foes beneath his feet.'

The last foe to be brought to nought is death;
For all things—all—hath God 'bowed beneath his
feet.'

But from the words, 'all things are bowed beneath him,'
we must admit one obvious exception—God Himself, He who
so bowed them beneath Messiah.

And when all things are bowed submissive to him,
Then shall the Son too bow submissive
To Him who bowed all beneath him,
That God may be the All, the All-pervading.

Again, what object will be attained by those who get themselves baptised by proxy for relations who died before they had such an opportunity for themselves? If dead men absolutely do not rise, why are these baptised for their friends? Yes, and why should we be facing hourly peril? Here am I meeting death daily—I swear it by that boast, my brothers, which I make of you in the presence of Messiah Jesus our Lord! If it is but with mortal hopes and aims that I have battled, like some gladiator, with veritable wild beasts here in Ephesus, what is the good of it all? If dead men rise never,

'E'en let us eat and drink,
For to-morrow we die.'

Do not make the mistake of thinking that you can associate with these sceptics unharmed.

'Ill company doth mar good characters.'¹

Start from this drugged slumber with a righteous resolve: continue no more to err. I say that these doubts show that some of you still know not the power of God—I say it that you may blush for it!

¹ From the *Thais*, a play by the poet Menander.

But I hear some caviller say, 'How *are* the dead to be raised? In what possible body are they to reappear?' Unreflecting man!—the very seed you yourself sow must decay as a preliminary condition for being quickened into new life. You sow—the living form that is by and by to rise up, is that what you sow?—no, but a leafless seed, of corn or some other plant, as the case may be. It is God who bestows on it its new form, according to His will: to each of the seeds He assigns its special development. Why, even now, all flesh is not identical in composition: the flesh of human beings, of brutes, of birds, of fishes, is essentially different. Nay more, there are bodies of heavenly beings, even as there are bodies of earthly beings. Ah, but far different is the glory of those heavenly forms from any beauty of the earthly! So the splendour of the sun is one thing, that of the moon another, that of the stars yet another; nay, star differs from star in splendour. These reflections will help you to understand the conditions of the resurrection of the dead. Think of the body as a seed—

Hymn of the Resurrection of the Body

It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption:
 It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory:
 It is sown in weakness, it is raised in might:
 It is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body.
 As surely as there is an animal body,
 So surely is there a spiritual body.

Yea, this is the meaning of that which is written,—

'The first man, Adam, came into being as a living existence,'
 The last Adam as a life-giving spirit.

Yet not first was the spiritual, but the animal;
 Then the spiritual.

The first man was of the earth, a vessel of clay;

The second Man is from Heaven.
As was the vessel of clay, so are the sons of clay:
And as is the Heavenly One, so are the sons of Heaven.
And, as we have borne the image of the vessel of clay,
We shall bear also the image of the Heavenly One.

So this I do assert, my brothers—material flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, nor may perishability inherit imperishability. Lo, the Mystic Secret is this that I tell you—

Hymn of the Victory

We shall all—
Not, sleep in death, but—
We shall all be changed.
In an instant, in the flash of an eye,
At the last trumpet-call.
For the trumpet shall sound,
And the dead shall be raised, imperishable;
And we, the living, shall be transformed.
For this perishable frame must clothe itself with the imperishable;
This mortal frame must clothe itself with immortality.
And when this perishable frame hath clad itself with the imperishable,
When this mortal frame hath clad itself with immortality,
Then shall come to pass the word that stands written—
‘Death hath been swallowed up in victory!’
‘Where, O Death, is that thy victory?’
‘Where, O Death, is that thy sting?’
His sting is given to death by sin;
Its power to hurt is given to sin by the Law.
But to God be the thanks, who is ever giving us the victory
Through our Lord, Jesus the Messiah!

Therefore, my brothers, dear ones, prove yourselves

steadfast, unflinching, overflowing with zeal in the Lord's work always, knowing as you do that your toil is not fruitless in the sight of the Lord.

XVI

11. *As to the Raising of the Alms-fund.* With respect to the charitable contributions to be forwarded to the members of the church at Jerusalem, I should like you to adopt the plan I arranged for the churches of Galatia. On the first day of the week let each of you set apart a certain portion of his profits, forming a little hoard, so that the raising of the contributions may not be postponed till my actual arrival. And, when I do visit you, to whatever persons you may give the authority of written credentials, them will I send as bearers of your bounty to Jerusalem. Indeed, if there appears sufficient reason for my going in person, they shall travel with me. I may say that I intend to visit you, when next I pass through Macedonia. My present plans, in fact, are for a journey through Macedonia; and I shall, it may be, stop with you—I may even stay through the winter—that you may start me on my journey in whatever direction I may be going next. I have changed my mind, you see, about looking in on you in the course of my journey to Macedonia. The fact is, I want, when I do come, to make a long stay with you, if the Lord permit me. I shall be staying in Ephesus, however, until Pentecost, because a wide door, full of opportunities for work, has opened there before me, and many are they who are trying to shut it in my face.

If Timotheus comes, let there be no attempts at overbearing him. He is as efficient a labourer in our Lord's work as I am. There must be no slights put upon him. When he has to leave, see him off like friends, so that he may come on to me; for I shall be expecting him along with some other brothers. With respect to our brother Apollos—I pressed him very hard to visit you with the brothers; but he had finally made up his mind not to come this time. He will, however, come when he can find a fitting opportunity.

Be wakeful sentinels; stand firm at your post of faith; be brave, strong soldiers. Let all your actions be done in a loving spirit.

I beg you, my brothers—you know the household of Stephanas, how they were the first sheaf of the harvest of Achaia, and how they laid themselves out for the relief of necessitous believers—I beg you to pay all deference to these and such as these, to every one, in fact, who helps us in our work and toils like us. Glad have I been to see the faces of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaïcus. They have fully made up for my deprivation of you. They have cheered my spirit, as they did yours. Therefore accord full recognition to such as these.

The churches of Asia send you their greeting. Aquila and Prisca salute you heartily in the love of our Lord, as does the congregation that meets at their house. All the brothers send you their greeting. Greet one another with the kiss of consecration.

This final salutation is in my own handwriting—

If there be any one who loves not the Lord, accursed be he!

The Coming of the Lord is at hand!

The grace of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah, be with you.

My love be with you all, in the presence of Messiah Jesus.

Paul.

THE SECOND (EXTANT) LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

[WRITTEN ABOUT 57 A.D.]

ST. PAUL left Ephesus soon after the despatch of his first letter, his departure being possibly precipitated by the riot in the theatre. He sailed to Macedonia: there, probably at Philippi, he awaited with trembling anxiety the return of Titus, whom he had sent to Corinth, with or soon after the bearers of that letter, invested with his authority to enforce its admonitions. His heart misgave him lest he had written too severely: he may have feared lest the mischief had gone so far that the church as a whole might champion the cause of the offender against morality, and fling off allegiance to its founder.¹ Titus' arrival set his fears at rest. There had been submission and reform; and there was a general tone of repentant affection towards him. Now, however, a new danger had arisen. The ultra-Jewish party in the church, reinforced by emissaries from Jerusalem (who made much of the fact that they bore credentials from the heads of the church there), were directly assailing his authority. They asserted that he had no right to the status of an apostle; he had never been a companion of the Lord, had never even seen Him; he had brought with him no credentials from the true apostles at Jerusalem, though he was never backward in self-commendation; he himself dared not claim the prerogatives (of free maintenance

¹ There are many scholars who hold that Paul's First Letter, and, as some think, even a personal visit which followed it, were so far unsuccessful, that he had to write an intermediate letter. Some of them regard this as lost, while others find it in Second Corinthians 10-13, maintaining that this is the true Second Letter, and that what precedes it is really the Third Letter.

in particular) of the genuine apostles; he was insincere, shift, and pusillanimous, since he had twice promised to visit the church, and had shrunk from doing so, showing that, though he might write vigorous letters, he dared not come in person; if he did, he would be impotent against opposition; he was, instead, intriguing with his own partisans by means of private letters; his plan of an alms-fund was but a device for getting hold of the money which he had so ostentatiously declined to accept for his own use.

It was absolutely necessary to meet these charges once and for all: this could only be done by speaking of himself and his work in a manner most hateful to Paul's Christian humility. It had, however, to be done; and hence this letter is commonly referred to as his *Apologia pro vita sua*.

THE LETTER

I

Paul—appointed through God's will an apostle of Messiah Jesus—and Timotheus the brother,

to the church of God which is in Corinth,
and, with them, to all believers in all Achaia:

Grace and heart-peace descend on you from the presence of God our Father, and from our Lord, Jesus the Messiah.

Praise be to God, the Father of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah, the Father of Compassions, the God of all Comfort! Blessed be He who in all my affliction comforts me so perfectly that I have comfort to spare for all afflicted ones—even the same comfort with which God is comforting me. Ay, though in overflowing measure Messiah's own sufferings are reproduced in me, yet, through Messiah's presence, overflowing is the measure of my comfort too. If, then, I am afflicted, it is all to win comfort for you, salvation for you: if I am comforted, this also is to win comfort for you. And the effect of this will be seen in your patient endurance of

suffering, just such sufferings as I too have to bear. Thus my hope for you is unwavering ever, knowing as I do, that, as surely as you share my sufferings, so surely shall you share my consolation. And these sufferings are very real. I do not want you, brothers mine, to underrate the afflictions that assailed me in Asia:—I really was crushed beneath them, excessively so, beyond my power of endurance. I absolutely despaired of life. Yes, and when I asked ‘What shall be the end?’ the whispered answer of my heart was ‘Death!’ This taught me to rely no more on my own strength, but upon God alone; for He can raise up men actually dead. Yes, He it was who delivered me from a death so imminent, and will go on delivering me. Ay, I have rested my hope on Him, the hope that He will still deliver me—as He will, so long as you add to mine your earnest prayers for me. So shall thanksgiving for my preservation be rendered by multitudes, thanksgiving for the gracious deliverance granted me in answer to the prayers of a multitude of persons.

I think I have some claim on your intercessions: for, if there is one boast I can make—and my conscience bears witness to its truth—it is this, that my relations with the world have been marked by purity and God-given sincerity, relying, not on worldly policy, but on the grace of God; and this especially applies to my relations with you. Sincerity, I repeat!—not the duplicity with which I am charged. It is simply untrue that I send any private communications. The only letters which I write are those which you read out to the congregation—ay, and which you do recognise as the expression of my mind, and will never cease, I hope, to recognise as such—just as, in fact, you have (some of you, at any rate) recognised that I am yours, that you have a right to be proud of me, as I shall be of you in the Day of the Coming of our Lord Jesus. So sure did I feel of this, that I meant to visit you before any one else—that so you might have, twice over, the pleasure of seeing me—to pass through you on my journey to Macedonia, and again to visit you on my return-journey from

Macedonia, and thus to be seen off by you when starting for Judæa. Well, this was my intention: am I then to be accused of fickleness of purpose, because it was not carried out? Dare you say that, when I make arrangements, I make them like shifty men of the world, with the intention of changing 'I will' into 'I will not,' if it suits me? By all the faithfulness of God I swear it, my utterances to you *never* waver between Yes and No—just as in the proclamation in your midst of God's Son Jesus as the Messiah by myself, by Silvanus, and by Timotheus, there was never any wavering between affirmation and negation—no! by the inspiration of God it was ever one consistent affirmative. The same is true of *all* the promises of God: they are affirmed by His 'I will,' ay, and they are sealed by His 'Amen'; and so God is glorified through our faith in His promises. Yes, it is God who gives us, and you too, an assured standing in the life in His Anointed, as it was He who anointed us to reign with Him. Ay, and He set upon us the seal that marks us His own, and He has given us the presence of His Spirit in our hearts, an earnest of what He yet will give.

I appeal to God—He shall witness for me—I stake my life upon the truth of what I say—it was purely from a wish to spare you pain that I relinquished my original intention of coming to Corinth. Do not misunderstand me: I do not, in respect of your faith, regard my relation to you as that of a master, whose coming is to be dreaded by his disorderly slaves; no, I want to be your helper; I want to gladden you. As to your *faith*—that is between you and God, and by it alone are you kept from falling.

II

But for my own sake I had resolved that my second visit to you should not be an occasion of grief. If I am to be grieving *you*, whence am *I* to look for joy, when the very person I am grieving is my one source of joy? That is why I send this letter, instead of paying my visit. I do not wish to come and feel only grief where I ought to feel only joy. I depend on

you so utterly that I feel sure that the joy of you all depends on mine. Ah, it was with tears that welled up from a heart sorely crushed and anguish-cramped that I wrote to you as I did! It was not, oh not that you might be grief-stricken that I wrote, but that you might know how I love you with an overflowing love!

As for him who was the cause of all this grief, it is not I whom he has grieved, but all of you—in some measure, that is, for I do not wish to be too severe. Well, now I think that the offender has been sufficiently punished by the censure passed upon him by the great majority of the church. Therefore, instead of keeping him under the ban, you may well forgive him now—yes, even comfort him, lest he, in his present attitude of mind, should sink into despair through excess of grief. Therefore I beg of you to give him full assurance of renewed love. For my main object in writing is attained, which was to test you, and to make sure whether you are prepared to render utter obedience. When you, after properly condemning an offence, are then disposed to pardon it, so am I. Whatever forgiveness I have extended—when I have done so—has been for your sake: I do it as in the presence of Messiah. We are not ignorant of the devices by which Satan would steal away one of our flock: we must not be overreached by him.

Do not think that this separation from you has been easy for me. When I arrived in the Troad to proclaim the Glad-tidings of Messiah, where by the Lord's hand a door was opened to me, my very soul was in a fever of unrest, through disappointment at not finding that Titus my brother had returned from you. I had to bid good-bye to them, and to move on to Macedonia. Not that my going was of my own choosing: no, thank God, it is He who everywhere leads me, leads me in Messiah's triumph-procession. By me He wafts abroad through every land the knowledge of Jesus, the incense of his triumphal march. Yes, I am Messiah's incense, up-wafted to God in the sight of all, alike of those who are going to deliverance, and of those who are going to destruction. To

the latter, it is the fore-smell of death; it ushers them on to their death: to the former, the fragrance of life; it ushers them on to life. Ah! who is really fit for so high an office? Well, if *I* am not, I at least am not—as too many are—trying to make a petty profit out of the message of God. No: in utter sincerity, as one commissioned by God, I speak as in the very presence of God, as in union with Messiah.

III

So I am ‘again beginning my self-commendation,’ am I? Or do you seriously think that *I* require—what my opponents find so necessary—written credentials to introduce me to you, or similar credentials from you? Credentials!—you, *you* are my credentials, written on my very heart, there for all men to recognise and to read—a letter manifestly written by Messiah, of which I am made the bearer—written thereon, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God, not, like Moses’ Law, upon tablets of stone, but upon my heart’s tablets, tablets of flesh. But it is our Messiah who makes me so confident of the validity of my mission, ay, confident in God’s presence. Never think that I hold myself qualified to argue for the truth by my own native powers: no, all my qualifications come from God. He it is who has qualified me to be a dispenser of His New Covenant, which consists, not of written ordinances, but of a Spirit. The written ordinance denounces a death-penalty; but the Spirit thrills with a new life. Yet if that administration of death—conveyed as it was in written ordinances and graven on stones—was ushered in haloed with glory, so much so that the sons of Israel could not gaze fixedly at the face of Moses, because of the splendour irradiating his face—a splendour which even then was fading—how much more shall the Spirit’s administration be haloed with glory? If the administration of the death-sentence was a thing of glory, much more must the administration of righteousness be radiant with excess of glory. For that old covenant, glory-haloed as it was then, now has all its glory dimmed, when thus

contrasted with the new transcendent glory. If that which was fading away passed out in splendour, much more shall that which ever abides be splendour-girt.

Since, then, I grasp such a glorious hope, I am fearlessly outspoken. I do not follow the example of Moses, who 'laid a veil over his face,' (*Exodus* 34:33), in order that the sons of Israel might not gaze to the end on that fading splendour. Ah, but so dulled were their perceptions, that they did not appreciate its significance: ay, and to this very day, at the reading of the Old Covenant, there lies the veil still, still unremoved—they see not that in the Messiah this covenant is ever being done away. Yes, even to this day, all the while that Moses' Law is being read, the veil lies dark upon their hearts. But, soon as their heart turns to our Lord, that veil is stripped away from it. Well, but the Lord is one with His Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there too is emancipation from bondage to that Law. And so

Hymn of the Change

All of us, with face unveiled
Gazing on the mirrored glory of our Lord,
Are hourly being transformed into the same likeness,
From a mere reflected glory into an inherent glory,
As may well be, since it proceeds from the Lord, the
Spirit.

IV

Therefore, since I do hold this office, my unflinching resolution must correspond to the mercy shown me in my conversion. I have renounced all underhand dealings—things of shame!—I tread no paths of unscrupulous cunning: I tamper not with God's message. No, by the plain utterance of the truth do I vindicate to every hearer's conscience my claim to be an apostle: as in God's presence I do it. And if the Glad-tidings as published by me be still obscured as with a veil, that veil exists only in the hearts of those who are destruction-bound. Ah, it is another god, the god of this

world, who has made blind the perceptions of these unbelievers, so that no ray lights them from the day-dawn of the Glad-tidings of Messiah's glory, of Messiah the Image of God. It is not myself that I herald forth: no, but the Messiah, Jesus our Lord. As for myself, I proclaim myself your bond-servant, for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, 'Out of darkness light shall flame,' who has kindled a flame in my heart, to make me a world's beacon of the knowledge of the glory of God as revealed in the face of Jesus the Messiah.

A treasure of price is this message; yet I bear it in a frail vessel of clay-ware, so proving that not from me, but from God is derived its all-prevailing efficacy.

Hymn of Tribulation

On every hand hard-pressed am I—yet not crushed!
In desperate plight am I—yet not in despair!
Close followed by pursuers—yet not abandoned by Him!
Beaten to the earth—yet never destroyed!

Evermore bearing about in my body
The imminence of such a death as Jesus died,
So that the life too of Jesus may be shown forth
In this body of mine.
Always, always, while yet I live,
Am I being handed over to death's doom
For Jesus' sake!

So that in this mortal flesh of mine may be shown forth also
The very life of Jesus.

So then while death is wearing down my frame, a new life is animating you. Yet, since I have that same spirit of faith exemplified in the words, 'I believed, therefore spake I,' I also believe, therefore I too speak. I know that He who raised from the dead our Lord, Jesus, shall also raise me from the dead along with Jesus, and shall set me in His presence, and you too. All my sufferings have come for your sake, in order that the divine favour, which so transcends all sufferings, may

waken a whole chorus of thanksgiving, overflowing in praise, to the glory of God. Therefore we never flinch, but

Hymn of the Home Eternal

Even though our outward man be wasting away,
Yet our inward man is being day by day renewed.
For this our affliction, a light, a momentary burden,
Is working out for us an eternal weight,
Transcending all measure, of glory.
We fix our earnest gaze, not on things seen,
But on the things unseen;
For things seen are but for a fleeting moment,
But for all eternity are the things unseen.

V

Ah yes, we know that if this mere tent,
Our habitation on earth, be taken down,
A solid building, reared by God, we have still,
A habitation no hands fashioned ever,
A home eternal, in the Heavens.
And while yet we are in this tent, we are sighing sore,
Ever longing, longing, to overdrape us
With the mantle of that mansion which is of Heaven—
If, indeed, at His Coming we shall be found
Still in flesh arrayed, and not disembodied:—
Ay, we who yet must dwell in that tent
Are sighing, burdened sore.
It is not that we would fain be disarrayed of the mortal body,
Nay, but rather overdressed with the immortal,
That mortality may be drowned in the sea of Life.
Yea, and He who for this very consummation hath fashioned
us is God,
God, who has given us His Spirit
As the earnest of the fulfilment of His promise.
Therefore are we ever of good heart:
We know that, while for us this body is our homeland,

We are exiles from our Lord;—
 For by faith we guide our steps, by no clear vision yet:—
 Ay, of good heart are we, and are right glad
 To be exiled from the body,
 And to come to the Home-land, to the presence of our
 Lord.
 Therefore our one ambition is—
 Be we in that Home-land, be we exiles yet—
 Still to be well-pleasing unto Him.
 For we have all to stand, stripped of all disguise,
 Before Messiah's bar,
 That each may receive the recompense
 For deeds whereof the body was the instrument,
 Yea, even according to that which he hath done,
 Be it good, be it evil.

Therefore, because I know how dread shall be that Coming
 of the Lord, I am pleading now with men. My heart's honesty
 lies open to God's eye; yet I trust, I do trust that it lies open
 before your convictions too. No! I am *not* 'once more stand-
 ing sponsor for myself to you'; but I am now giving you fair
 cause for boasting of your part in me. I want you to be armed
 with a reply to those opponents who have but outward show
 whereof to vaunt, not the heart's sincerity. If I have been—
 as these men say—'beside myself,' it was with enthusiasm for
 God's cause: if I am—as I maintain—in my sober senses, it
 is that I may the better do you service. We order not our own
 lives, for

Hymn of the New Life

The love of our Messiah constraineth us:
 For to this conclusion have we come—
 One died for the sake of all: in Him then did all die.
 Yea, and for all did He die,
 That the living should live no more for themselves,
 But for Him who died for them,
 And rose from the dead.

So from henceforth we appraise no man by human standards;
 Ay, and if we have fixed our thoughts upon Messiah's humanity,
 No more do we so think of Him.
 Whoso hath passed into that New Life of Messiah,
 He is created anew:
 The old life has passed away;
 Lo, it has become new!

And of all this God is the source. He reconciled me to Himself by the mediation of Messiah; and He has assigned to me the office of this reconciliation, the Charter whereof is

From Creed-Chant

GOD WAS PRESENT IN THE MESSIAH
 RECONCILING TO HIMSELF THE WORLD,
 CANCELLING THE RECORD OF THEIR TRANSGRESSIONS.

And the message of this reconciliation He entrusted to me. I am acting, therefore, as Messiah's ambassador. It is as though God were pleading with you by my mouth. As Messiah's representative, I implore you, be reconciled to God.

Creed-Chant (*contd.*)

JESUS KNEW NOT SIN;
 YET GOD MADE HIM TO BE THE WORLD'S SIN
 FOR OUR SAKES,
 THAT WE, WHOSE SIN HE HAD THUS ASSUMED,
 MIGHT BECOME, BY OUR UNION WITH HIM,
 THE VERY RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

VI

Yes, I am God's fellow-worker; and I implore you to accept this His grace, and to accept it not in vain. He says, 'IN A

TIME OF ACCEPTANCE HAVE I HEARKENED TO THEE; IN THE DAY OF DELIVERANCE HAVE I HELPED THEE.’—(*Isaiah* 49: 8)—that time of gracious acceptance is now! Behold, now is your day of deliverance! While thus I plead, I take care to give no cause of spiritual hindrance to any man, that no reproach may attach to the discharge of my office. No, in all respects I try to prove the validity of my claim to be a steward of God’s bounty—

Hymn of the Herald of Salvation

In many-sided endurance—
 Amid afflictions, sore straits, and privations,
 Amid scourgings, prison-cells, and riots,
 Amid toils, night-vigils, and fastings:—
 In purity, in spiritual illumination,
 In long-suffering, in kindness,
 In the Holy Spirit’s presence, in love unfeigned,
 In uttering the Message of Truth, in using the might
 of God:—
 Bearing the sword of righteousness in my right hand, the
 shield on my left;
 Compassed with glory and infamy, with praise and defaming;
 Branded as a deceiver—vindicated as true;
 Ignored by men—recognised by God;
 Ever at point to die—yet lo, I live on!
 Chastened by suffering, yet never done to death;
 Sorrowing ever, yet evermore glad;
 Poor myself, yet bestowing riches on thousands;
 Having nothing, yet holding all things in sure
 possession!

Corinthians, Corinthians! to you my lips are unlocked, my heart is opened wide. Not, oh not in me is there any narrowness: the narrowness is in you, in your own hearts. Requite my love—I appeal to you as my children—open wide your hearts too.

Yet open not your hearts in laxity of tolerance for sin.
Do not contract mismated alliances with unbelievers:—

Hymn of Consecration

What fellowship hath righteousness with lawlessness ?
What common meeting-ground have light and darkness ?
What concord can be between Messiah and Belial ?
What partnership can be between believers and unbelievers?
What compact between a temple of God and idols ?
For we, we are a temple of the Living God: of us God said,
' I will dwell in their midst, I will walk among them,
And I will be their God, and my people shall they be.'
Therefore, ' Come out from among them, and sever your-
selves,

Saith the Lord,
And cleave not to the unclean thing;
And I will accept you, and I will be to you a Father,
And ye shall be to me as sons and daughters,
Saith the Lord, the Almighty.'

VII

Since, then, we grasp these promises, my dear ones, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement, alike of the body and the Spirit, and try, in the fear of God, to make our consecration perfect.

As I have said, make room in your hearts for me. Not one of you did I ever wrong, not one did I betray to his ruin; not one did I overreach. I do not mean this as a reproach, as though your treatment of me had been different. No, I have said already that you are nested in my heart; with you I mean to live, with you to die. To you I speak with utter unreserve: right proud am I of you: with comfort am I filled brim-full; I am overflowing with joy, despite all my affliction.

I may well speak of affliction: when I came to Macedonia, this frame of mine had no respite; everywhere was affliction. I was beset by assaults from foes without, was harassed by

inward misgivings. But He who comforts the sinking hearts, even God, comforted me by the arrival of Titus; and not only by his arrival, but also by his account of the comfort he had found in his intercourse with you. He told me of your yearning affection, of your expressions of sorrow, of your reawakened earnestness in my cause, so that I was more gladdened still. Ah, though I did pain you by the tone of my letter, I do not regret it now!—I admit that I was inclined to regret it, for I see clearly that that letter really pained you, though it were but for a time—no, I am glad now, not because you were pained, but because your pain led to repentance. For in your pain you turned to God, so that I could not find it in my heart to punish you now. The grief that turns to God breeds repentance which leads to deliverance from evil—a thing never to be regretted. It is that hopeless sorrow of the heathen world that breeds death. For, observe, in this very instance in which your grief turned to God, what earnestness it bred in you, what eagerness to clear yourselves, as a church, of all complicity, what indignation at the sin, what dread of my severity, yet what longing for my presence, what fervour, what determination to punish the offender! On every count you have established your innocence of complicity, as a church, in this affair. Well then, though I did write in this strain to you, it was not done primarily to secure the punishment of the offender—no, nor yet for the reinstatement in his rights of the wronged one. No, it was mainly in order that your readiness to champion my authority might be made plain to yourselves, as in the very presence of God. This was why I was so relieved at the issue; and, besides my feeling of relief, I was very greatly, was most exceedingly gladdened to see the joy of Titus; for I can perceive that his spirit has drunk refreshment from you all. Whatever boast I have made to him about you, I have not had to blush for it. No, just as all I have ever said to you was said in truth, so also my boasting of you in Titus' presence has turned out to be simple truth. Yes, and his heart yearns and glows toward you, whenever he calls to

mind your universal submissiveness, the awe, the trembling eagerness, with which you received him. Glad am I that on every point I am now reassured with respect to you.

VIII

Now I want to tell you, my brothers, of God's gracious gift, bestowed by Him among the churches of Macedonia—the gift of generosity. They have been tested to the uttermost by affliction, yet their joy has throughout been overbrimming: in spite of their poverty,—their deep poverty,—it has overflowed in a very opulence of unselfishness. They contributed—I can bear witness to that—up to the very limits, nay, beyond the limits, of their power, and that too unasked; and with earnest entreaty they implored me that they might have the privilege of bearing a part in supplying the needs of the members of the church in Jerusalem. Ay, and they went beyond all my hopes, in that they first gave their very selves to the Lord—and to me too, in accordance with the will of God. In consequence of this, I have been begging Titus to put the crown of completion on this generous movement of yours, since its inception was due to him. Full you are to overflowing of every other grace—of faith, of eloquence, of spiritual illumination, of enthusiasm in every form, of the love that leaps from your hearts to mine—ah then, you *should* overflow with this grace also! I have no thought of dictating to you; no, but I point you to the example of the enthusiasm of others, and I do want to prove by trial the genuineness of your love. You can appreciate the gracious kindness of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah:—He was so rich, yet all for your sakes He became so poor, in order that you, *you*, might through that poverty of His become rich. I am but putting the matter as it appears to me: still, this is surely the only course worthy of you, considering that it was you who first set the example, not only of carrying the relief-scheme into action, but also of accepting the idea enthusiastically—and that was a year ago! Well now, do complete the execution, so that the completion of the design (in

proportion to your means, that is) may be on a scale worthy of the enthusiasm with which you adopted it. For, given the previous condition of eager willingness, an execution in proportion to one's means, not out of all proportion to them, is acceptable to God. I am not urging this that others may be relieved of their liability, and unfair pressure put upon you; but upon the principle of fair distribution of the burden. Just now your abundance supplies their lack, in order that some day their abundance may supply your lack, so that a fair balance may be struck, as in the precedent recorded in Scripture, 'HE THAT GATHERED MUCH HAD NOT TOO MUCH: HE THAT GATHERED LITTLE HAD NOT TOO LITTLE.'—(*Exodus* 16: 18)

Thanks be to God, who is putting the same eagerness to help you into Titus' heart as into mine. He not only welcomed my proposal, but was himself so much in earnest, that he has needed no bidding to depart hence to you. In company with him I have sent that brother whose fame as a herald of the Glad-tidings has spread through all the churches. Nay more, he has been actually elected by the churches as my fellow-traveller, to be with me at the distribution of the bounty of which I am treasurer, thus to subserve the glory of God, and to put me in better heart for the task. For I have to be on my guard against this, that no one may have any excuse for carping at my administration of the generous gift of which I am treasurer. I must be careful of my good name, not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of men. With these two I have despatched a third brother, of whose earnestness I have again and again made proof in many matters. He is, I may say, more earnest than ever now, through his perfect confidence in you. Well, if the credentials of Titus be demanded, say that he is my partner, that he helps in the work I am doing for you: as for those of our other two brothers, say that they are delegates from the churches, that they manifest the glory of Messiah. Show to these in the sight of the churches the reality of your love: show what good grounds I had for boasting of you.

IX

Of course, as regards giving or withholding relief from the members of the church in Jerusalem, it is superfluous for me to reopen the question in this letter. I have no doubt of your eager willingness: that is why I boast of you to the Macedonians here, telling them, 'Achaia has been ready for a year past': and your enthusiasm has stimulated more than yourselves. Well, I have sent on the brothers (for fear lest my boast of you may be stultified in this matter) to ensure that you may be (as I kept saying that you were) quite ready with the contribution. Suppose some Macedonian friends were to come down with me on my next visit, and find you had nothing ready—how ashamed I should be (to say nothing of yourselves) in face of the hollowness of this boasting! Hence I have thought it absolutely necessary to request our brothers to visit you in advance, and to complete in good time the collection of that long-promised bounty of yours, so that it may be really ready—and let it be the maximum that generosity can bestow, not the minimum that parsimony can spare. Bear in mind the saying, 'Grudging sowing makes grudging harvest, and bounteous sowing makes bounteous harvest.' Let each man give according to his heart's choice, not regretting his gift, as if it were wrung from him, for 'It is the cheerful giver that God loves.' Ay, and God is able to lavish every gracious gift upon you, so that you, always possessing abundance of everything, may lavishly contribute to every good undertaking. So the blessing of the Good Man in Scripture will apply to you—'HE HATH FLUNG WIDE HIS SEED, HE HATH GIVEN TO THE POOR: SO HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS ABIDETH EVER.'—(*Psalms* 112: 9). And God, who supplies 'seed to the sower, and bread for human food,' shall supply seed to you—nay, shall multiply your store, and shall augment the harvest-yield of your righteousness. So, as I said, you will be enriched with everything, till your large-hearted generosity wakes a chorus of thanksgiving to God from those who receive your bounty through my hands. The rendering of this service has a twofold bearing: it not only fully supplies the necessities of your brother-believers, but it also

overflows in a flood of gratitude to God, the thanksgiving of all those far-off friends. For they, in presence of the proof you have given of it, in this service to them, will be praising God for the obedience to the law of love which has accompanied your acceptance of the Glad-tidings of Messiah, and for your whole-hearted liberality to them and to all needy ones. And by their prayers for you they will be expressing their yearning affection towards you, kindled by the transcendent grace of God that is resting on you. Thanks be to God for this His gift, precious beyond description!

X

But, to return to the subject of my own attitude to you:—I, Paul—I, who am of lowly demeanour when in your midst, but, when at a distance from you, am fearlessly outspoken,—by all the meekness and gentleness of Messiah I make a personal appeal to you. I beg you not to drive me to act, when I do visit you, with that fearless decision with which I am fully prepared to confront certain men who account me as one invested with no more than human powers. Very human as I am, I do not fight with merely human weapons. No, the weapons with which I war are not weapons of mere flesh and blood, but, in the strength of God, they are mighty enough to raze all strongholds of our foes. I can batter down bulwarks of human reason, I can scale every crag-fortress that towers up bidding defiance to the true knowledge of God. I can make each rebel purpose my prisoner-or-war, and bow it into submission to Messiah. I wait in readiness to punish all the disaffected remnant, as soon as your obedience, as a church, is fully secured.

Have you eyes for the outward semblance only? If there is any one who has the assurance to style himself as ‘of Messiah’s party,’ let him think again, let him reflect that, whatever part he has in Messiah, I have as much. Ay, even if I be tempted to go to extravagant lengths in vaunting my authority—it was our Lord who invested me with it, to build up your church,

not (like my opponents) to break it down—I shall not have to blush for exceeding the truth. Do not let it be imagined that I am trying to scare you by hectoring letters. I know my opponents say, ‘Oh, as for his letters, they are severe and vigorous; but, when he comes in person, what is he but a weakling, and his rebukes—who heeds them?’ Let him who speaks in this strain make no mistake!—however strong may be the language of these letters written from a distance, no less strong will I be in action, when I stand among you. I cannot degrade myself by stooping to their level, by comparing my claims with those of some who stand sponsors for themselves! They measure their own worth by a standard of their own: they compare themselves with themselves—fools that they are! But I—I do not vaunt of prerogatives beyond my legitimate province. I confine myself within the limits of the sphere of operations allotted to me by God—and that province certainly included my mission to you. I am not, I repeat, straining to overstep the limits of my province, as though I had no legitimate mission to you. I pressed on till I reached you—I was the first to do so—bearing the Glad-tidings of Messiah. I am not the man to filch the fruits of another’s toils, and then boast of my gains. No! but I do still cherish the hope that, as your faith goes on growing, I may, while in Corinth, be invested with the very high honour—and I shall still be within my legitimate sphere of operations—of bearing onward the Glad-tidings to districts still further beyond you. But, in any case, I shall not trespass on another man’s field of work, and then boast of results achieved ere ever I came on the scene. If a man must be boasting, ‘LET HIM MAKE HIS BOAST OF THE LORD’S FAVOUR.’—(*Jeremiah* 9: 24). That man’s claim is proved, not who accredits himself, but who is accredited by the Lord.

XI

I trust you will bear awhile with this sort of talk on my part—it is foolish, I know. Ah yes! I feel that you do bear with

me. I speak thus, because I am jealous in my love for you—a jealousy in God's cause. I betrothed you to one husband exclusively: I meant to present the church of Corinth to Messiah as a pure virgin-bride. But now—O, I dread lest, as the serpent by his cunning deluded Eve, your thoughts may yet be corrupted into forsaking the whole-hearted purity which yearns to Messiah alone. There is every reason why you should bear with me, if it be true that this interloper, of whom I hear, is proclaiming another type of Jesus from Him whom I proclaimed, or if you are being invited to receive a different Spirit such as you never received through me, or an opposition Glad-tidings, such as you did not accept from me. Well, as to my credentials:—I am, as I estimate my claims, not a whit inferior to the Jerusalem apostles—the apostles *par excellence*. Even though I be (as some aver) untutored in rhetoric, at least I am not so in spiritual illumination. No! I have in every way made that plain to your church in all your congregations. Or did I, forsooth, perpetrate a wrong in humiliating myself that you might be uplifted—I mean, in my publishing to you God's Glad-tidings free of cost to yourselves? I actually accepted from other churches the cost of my maintenance—I felt as if I were robbing them!—so as to be able to minister to you. When, during my stay at Corinth, I actually lacked the necessities of life, even then I would not clog any of you with my maintenance. No, it was the brothers that came from Macedonia who fully supplied my necessities. So I kept myself all along, and will keep myself, from becoming a burden upon you. As surely as Messiah's truth dwells in me, so surely shall my mouth not be stopped from making this boast of independence, in any district of Achaia. Why is this? Because I do not love you? God knows I do! No, as I am acting I will continue to act, on purpose to cut the ground from under the feet of those who long to secure a vantage-ground against me. I mean to force them, in their arrogant boasting, to meet me on equal terms. These men, I tell you, are really false apostles, impostors, creatures who masquerade

as Messiah's missionaries. Don't say, 'The thing is incredible': why, Satan himself is wont to masquerade as an angel of light. What wonder, then, if these, who are doing his work, masquerade as servants of righteousness? Their end shall correspond to their deeds!

I resume—and let no one conclude that I have lost my wits, because I talk in this strain. Nay, but if you cannot help thinking so, why then, give me an audience—if only as to a witless man!—so that I may, following my opponents' example, indulge in a little boasting of my own. In talking so, I am not speaking by inspiration from our Lord, but, so to speak, in pure witlessness—so hollow a thing does this boasting seem. Still, since all these emissaries from Jerusalem are boasting in such very human fashion, I will meet them on their own ground, I also am going to make my boast. *You* are so very wise, that you can afford to extend good-humoured tolerance to the witless. Indeed, you seem to put up with it when people like these interlopers make you their slaves, eat up your substance, entrap you, assume arrogant airs, ay, smite you on the face! I call it disgraceful that you should submit to such treatment from them, as though I refrained only through weakness! Still, if any of them is disposed to take high ground—imbecile talk is this!—I can take high ground too. Are these men Hebrews? Well, so am I. Are they sons of Israel? So am I. Are they Abraham's seed? So am I. Are they 'servants of Messiah?'—how insane is such talk!—I am too, and far more so than they. In toils I have immeasurably surpassed them, in imprisonments immeasurably; in endurance of scourging there is no comparison. Many a time have I been face to face with death. From the Jews alone I have five times received the nine-and-thirty stripes. Three times have I been beaten with the Roman rods. Once I suffered stoning: three times have I been ship-wrecked: for a whole night and day have I drifted on the fathomless sea. I have been incessantly travelling; have been exposed to perils from rivers in flood, to perils from bandits, to perils from my

countrymen the Jews, to perils from the heathen, to perils in the city, to perils in lonely places, to perils on the sea, to perils from traitors disguised as fellow-believers. I have endured toil and travail, sleepless nights—ay, often!—hunger and thirst, fastings—yes, many a time—cold and nakedness. And besides all the rest, there is the daily haunting insistence of anxiety for all the churches. Who is there that has shrinking scruples, but I share his misgivings? Who is there that is made to stumble and fall, but I am aflame with indignation? Nay then, if I must be boasting, it is of instances of my own frailty that I will boast. God, the Father of our Lord Jesus, He who is blessed for evermore, knows that I am not paltering with the truth. Here is an instance:—In Damascus the governor under king Aretas had the city-gates guarded on purpose to arrest me. I had actually to be lowered through the window of a chamber-on-the-wall in a basket (little dignity was there!), and so slipped through his fingers.

XII

I am driven to boast—it really is not seemly—still, I will pass on to a worthier subject, visions and revelations vouchsafed me by our Lord. I know a man who—but all this happened fourteen years ago—was once grasped by the power of Messiah—whether he was still in the body, or rapt from the body, I do not know: that is known to God alone—and, while in this state, he was caught up even to the Third Heaven. I know how that man, while in this state—whether still in the body, or rapt from the body, I do not know: that is known to God alone—was caught up into Paradise, and how he there heard utterances unutterable, beyond the power of man to shape into words. If this heavenly condition still continued, I might boast of it; but about my own earthly self I will boast no more—unless it be of instances of my frailty. Yet, if I should be for boasting still, I should be no witless braggart, for I should at any rate be speaking the truth. However, I forbear. I would not have any one form a loftier estimate of me, than

what he gathers from actually seeing my deeds and hearing my speeches.

Yes, and in the matter of these very revelations—lest through the transcendent splendour of them I might be over-elated, there was given to me that which tortured me like a stake driven through my flesh, ‘a messenger of Satan,’ to buffet me, to keep me from being too much elated. Ay, and three times did I make supplication to the Lord with respect to this, asking that it might be removed from me. And still He answered me, ‘Sufficient for thee is My grace: it is in the forge of infirmity that strength is wrought to perfection.’ Most cheerfully, then, will I boast of my frailty, rather than murmur, so that over me, as a tent, may be spread the might of Messiah. And so I am contented in the midst of frailty, outrages, sore straits, persecutions, privations, all for Messiah’s sake; for it is just when I am frail that I am truly strong.

I have been talking like some imbecile:—it is you who have driven me to it. I had a right to expect that you would accredit me, for I have been not a whit inferior to the Great Apostles, the apostles *par excellence*—even though I be ‘of no account!’ All the distinguishing marks, at any rate, of an apostle have appeared in my deeds wrought amongst you with such steadfast endurance—in signs, in miracles, in mighty works. Wherein were you placed in a position of inferiority to the other churches—unless it be in my not clogging you with my maintenance? Pardon my unfair treatment of you in this respect!

Mark me, I am now for the third time making arrangements to visit you. I am not going to clog you with my maintenance. I am seeking, not your property, but your own selves. I do not expect you to maintain me, since it is not the part of the children to hoard up for their parents, but that of the parents to do so for their children. And so I will most gladly spend all I have, ay, spend my own life for your souls’ sake!—yes, even if through loving you only too much, I find myself the less loved by you.

But I hear my opponents objecting—‘Admitting that he has not burdened you with his maintenance, he has, like the cunning knave he is, entrapped you into paying a great deal more than if he had.’ What!—among all the messengers I have sent to you, is there one through whom I have wrung fraudulent gain from you? Titus, for instance—I begged him to visit you, and with him I sent the other brother. Dare you say that Titus overreached you? Have not he and I shaped our conduct by the promptings of the same Spirit? Have we not walked step for step together?

You must be thinking all this time that I am on my defence before *you*. No! it is in God’s presence that I speak, in my devotion to Messiah. And it is all, my dear friends, for your sakes, and to promote your spiritual progress as a church. I dread, oh, I dread lest, when I do visit you, I may find a disappointing change in you—ay, and that you may find a disappointing change in me! I dread lest I may find among you dissensions, jealousy, stormy passions, intrigues, slanders, malicious gossip, inflated conceit, turbulence. I dread lest, when I come this next time, God may humiliate me at the sight of you. I dread lest I may have to mourn over many who have previously lived in sin, and yet have never repented of the uncleanness, the fornication, the wantonness which they have practised.

XIII

This is the third time that I purpose to visit you. *Three times!*—BY THE LIPS OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES SHALL EVERY WORD BE CONFIRMED.’—(*Deuteronomy* 19: 15). I have forewarned you, I forewarn you again—as I did when I was for the second time among you, so I do now from a distance—I warn those previous sinners, and all other offenders, that if I do come again, I will not spare. Since you will not be satisfied without tangible evidence that the Messiah speaks by my mouth, you shall have it. He is not weak in His relations to you: nay, He is ready to put forth His might in your midst.

True, in human weakness He died on the cross; but He now lives by the effluence of God's own power. I too, by my share in His humanity, am weak; but I shall also share in His life, through the manifestation of God's power, in dealing with you. While there is time, make proof of yourselves, to see if *you* are really holding to the Faith: test yourselves. Is it possible that you do not recognise you own condition?—that you are not sure whether Jesus the Messiah is really among you?—as He must be, unless—unless—you have no proof of His presence among you. I do hope that you will be prepared to recognise that *I*, at all events, lack not proof of His presence in me. I am praying now, kneeling before God, that you may take no false step this time—not in order that my claims may be triumphantly vindicated, but that you may, without compulsion, take the right course—ay, though my arm be thereby paralysed! For I am powerless to assail the truth: I am strong only in defence of the truth. Glad am I when I do find myself powerless to touch you, when I find you unassailable; for all my prayer is for this, your complete reformation. That is why I write to you in this strain from a distance, to save myself from having, when I come to you, to deal severely with you in the exercise of that authority which our Lord has delegated to me—to be employed, however, in the building up of the fabric of His church, not in breaking it down.

Finally, my brothers, farewell. Let there be a perfect reformation among you: stimulate one another: live in unanimity and peace. And so God, the source of love and peace, shall be with you. Greet one another with the kiss of consecration.

All the members of the church here greet you.

May the grace of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah, and the love of God, and the presence, shared by all, of the Holy Spirit, be with all of you.

THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

[WRITTEN ABOUT 57 A.D.]

The Persons addressed. Galatia, a mountainous district in the centre of Asia Minor, was peopled by descendants of those hordes of Gauls who swept down upon Italy and Greece in the third century B.C. They had now for some 200 years been under the dominion of Rome, and with the original Celts were blended Italians, Greeks, and Jews. St. Paul, on his second missionary journey, was compelled to make a halt among them through severe bodily affliction, probably acute ophthalmia, which causes not only intense pain, but also repulsive disfigurement (ch. 4: 13-15). This warm-hearted, impressible people received him with pity and sympathy, listened to his teaching with delight, and accepted the Gospel with enthusiasm. He paid them a brief visit in the course of his third journey, and found it necessary to give them some warnings; but it was not till three years later, while he was staying at Corinth, that he heard of their serious lapse from the Faith.¹

Reasons why it was written. During his absence, emissaries from Judæa came to them, proclaiming that there was no salvation except through conformity to the Mosaic Law and the Traditions of the Elders, laying special stress on the necessity for circumcision. Their preaching had such an extraordinary fascination for these impressible, fickle highlanders,

¹ A Roman province known as Galatia (of which the original Galatia formed but the northern part) had been constituted in 25 B.C., and extended far south, including Antioch in Pisidia, and Iconium, with Lystra and Derbe in Lycaonia. Some scholars hold that it was to the people of this southern portion of the new province that this letter was addressed, to the churches, in fact, founded in the first missionary journey. There is also much diversity of opinion as to the date of the letter and the place where it was written.

naturally prone as they were to superstition, that the apostle can compare the effect on them to nothing but the spell of the evil-eye, from which a steadfast gaze at the crucified Saviour could and should have saved them.

As in the letters to the Corinthians he met the attacks of the Judaisers on his personal character and influence, so in this letter, which may be called the first draught of the letter to the Romans, he meets their attack on the great principle of Justification by Faith, which he preached. He not only meets it, but carries the war into the enemy's country.

THE LETTER

I

Paul, an apostle,—sent forth from no synod of men, ordained by no man, but by Jesus the Messiah, and by God our Father who raised Jesus from the dead—I, and all the brothers who are with me,

to the churches of Galatia—

Grace be bestowed on you, and peace withal, from God our Father, and from our Lord, from Jesus the Messiah, who yielded up Himself to die for our sins, in order to rescue us from this present evil age, in accordance with the will of Him who is our God and our Father too. To Him be all the glory ascribed through all the ages of ages. Amen.

I am simply amazed to find you so suddenly deserting Him who invited you to share the grace of Messiah, deserting to what is in fact an opposition Glad-tidings, not an alternative one—unless, indeed, we are to allow that these men carry any real weight, these men who are trying to unsettle you, and who would fain distort the Glad-tidings of Messiah into something different. I tell you, even if I—even if an angel from heaven should come bearing to you a Glad-tidings at variance with that which I first proclaimed to you, let him be accursed! I have said this before, I say it again now—*if any one* is proclaiming a message to you at variance with that which you

first received, accursed be he! Am I now—as my enemies accuse me of doing—waiting for man's approval or for God's? Am I angling for popularity? No, if I still sought popularity with men, no bondservant of Messiah should I be.

I must impress on you, my brothers, the distinctive feature of the Glad-tidings as I proclaimed it—namely, its superhuman nature. It was not from man that *I* received it, nor by man that I was taught it: it came to me directly through a revelation given by Jesus the Messiah. You have heard of my career during the period of my Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God atrociously, how I harried it. In my study and observance of the Mosaic Law I outstripped many of my contemporaries in my nation. I was, in fact, an extreme fanatic in defence of the traditions of my fathers. But at last it pleased God—who had already, from my very birth, set me apart from all men, and who by His grace called me—to reveal His Son within my soul, so that I might proclaim among the Gentiles the Glad-tidings that tell of Him.

Then, immediately, without submitting my purpose to any human being—without even going up to Jerusalem to meet those who were apostles before me—I departed into Arabia, and thence returned to Damascus. After that—three years later—I did go up to Jerusalem, to make the acquaintance of Kephas. I stayed with him but a fortnight; and not one of the other apostles did I even see, except James the brother of our Lord. Now in all I am telling you, mark me, I testify, as at the bar of God, that I am not lying. After that I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. So far my face was still unknown to the churches of Judæa that are in Messiah's kingdom: only they were constantly hearing, 'He who once used to persecute us is now proclaiming the Glad-tidings of the Faith which he once tried to ruin.' And so in me they found that for which to glorify God.

II

Then—but after the lapse of fourteen years—I once more

went up to Jerusalem along with Barnabas; and I took with me Titus also. It was in obedience to a revelation that I went; and I laid before the members of that church the lines on which I proclaim the Glad-tidings among the Gentiles. But this communication I made in a private conference, to their recognised leaders, to guard against the possibility of my past or present mission-work being discredited.

And here I would say that it is not true that the circumcision of Titus, who accompanied me (he is a Greek), was made an indispensable condition of their approval of my mission. As a matter of fact, the rite was *not* performed because it was made a party-question by those false brethren fraudulently foisted on the church—men mean enough to insinuate themselves into our midst in order to play the spy upon our freedom from thralldom to the Mosaic Law, the freedom we possess by virtue of our life in Messiah, in Jesus. Their object was to effect our complete enslavement to that law. But not for one hour did I give way to them by yielding the submission they claimed. I took this uncompromising attitude on purpose that the true principles of the Glad-tidings might, in relation to you, remain unshaken.

But from those who are of high reputation amongst them (their eminence in the church, however, whatever it was, is for me quite beside the question: God does not respect mere human dignity)—to me, as I said, these influential leaders suggested no new line of action. Quite the contrary: when they perceived that I really had been entrusted with the proclamation of the Glad-tidings to the uncircumcised Gentiles, just as Peter was with that to the circumcised Jews,—for God, whose informing power fitted Peter for the mission to the circumcised, fitted me also for that to the Gentiles,—and when they recognised the grace bestowed on me, then James and Kephas and John, who had the reputation of being ‘the pillars of the church,’ gave to me and to Barnabas their right hands in token of partnership, in recognition of our message to the Gentiles, as of theirs to the circumcised. They stipulated only that we

should remember their poor, the very thing which, unbidden, I was only too eager to do.

Indeed, so far from their taking exception to my line of action, it was I who had to do so to theirs. When Kephas came to Antioch, I protested to his face against his conduct there, for it had been the subject of general condemnation. The facts were these—before the arrival of certain emissaries from James, he used regularly to eat in company with the Gentiles. But, as soon as these men came, he proceeded to draw back, and to adopt an exclusive attitude, haunted as he was by fear of the circumcision party. Ay, and the other Jewish members of the church joined in his dissimulation—in fact, even Barnabas was drawn away by their example of dissimulation. But, when I perceived that they were swerving from the straight-forward path in relation to the true teaching of the Glad-tidings, then I spoke out to Kephas,—it was at a public meeting,—and said, ‘ If you, born Jew as you are, can live—as you have been living—as a Gentile, and not as a Jew, how dare you try now to force Gentiles to conform to Jewish ritual? You and I are Jews by blood, and not “ sinners of the Gentiles ”; yet we have been convinced that humanity, if not pronounced righteous through faith in Jesus the Messiah, cannot be so in consequence of any observance of the ritual of the Mosaic Law. Therefore we, no less than they, have believed in Jesus the Messiah, that we might be pronounced righteous on the one possible condition, the exercise of faith in the Messiah, as we could not have been through performance of the requirements of that Law; for all humanity shall be denied acquittal of sin through performance of that Law. But if (as your new attitude implies) we ourselves, through seeking to be made righteous solely through union with Messiah, have thereby lapsed into the sinful state of mere Gentiles, dare you accept the logical conclusion—that the Messiah is a promoter of sin? Out upon the suggestion! Yet if, after pulling down a structure (as you have done to the Law), I set about building up the very same again (as you are

doing by your present action), I thereby brand myself as having been a wrong-doer in that former act, that act to which faith in Messiah led *you*! What have we to do with the Law? I, through the operation of the curse of the Law, have (in Messiah's person) suffered the death which puts me beyond the reach of the Law, to live henceforth a life consecrated to God. Yes, I have shared Messiah's crucifixion. I am living indeed, but it is not I that live; it is Messiah whose life is in me. As for this my earthly existence, I live by virtue of my faith in God's Son, who loved me, and surrendered Himself to death for me. I do not treat God's gracious gift as a thing of no significance—as I should do if I followed your example—for, if righteousness can be attained through observance of the Mosaic Law, Messiah's death was simply superfluous.

III

Poor unreflecting Galatians!—how could you be caught and held by this spell of the evil-eye, when right before your eyes hung portrayed Jesus our Messiah, crucified as He was? I want an answer from you to this one question—when you received the Gift of the Spirit, was that in consequence of your performance of deeds enjoined by the Mosaic Law, or of the faith with which you accepted the Glad-tidings? Is it possible that you can be so unreflecting? You began your new life by the reception of the Spirit: do you think to perfect yourselves in it by the reception of a sign scored on your flesh? Have all your past experiences been in vain for you?—if they have indeed been in vain! God bestows on you His Spirit, He works mighty deeds in your midst—does He do this in consequence of your observance of the Mosaic ritual, or in consequence of the faith with which you hearkened to His message? Your position is the same as that of Abraham: 'HE BELIEVED GOD, AND THAT FAITH WAS SET DOWN TO HIS ACCOUNT AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.'—(*Genesis* 15: 6). You must recognise, then, that those who rely on faith, those only are the true 'sons of Abraham.' Now the Scriptures, foreseeing that God ever holds the Gentiles

(equally with Jews) righteous by virtue of their exercise of faith, proclaimed long ago that Glad-tidings to Abraham, 'IN THEE SHALL ALL THE NATIONS BE BLESSED.'—(*Genesis* 12: 3). It follows that those who rely on faith shall share the blessing of Abraham, the Man of Faith. On the other hand, all who rely on observance of that Law are burdened by a curse: for it stands written, 'CURSED IS EVERY ONE WHO ABIDES NOT (which no man ever succeeded in doing) BY ALL THINGS THAT STAND WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM.'—(*Deuteronomy* 27:26). Further, that under the conditions of the Law no man is held righteous at God's bar is evident from the words, 'THE RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL LIVE'—by his observance of the Law? not at all; but—'BY HIS FAITH.'—(*Habakkuk* 2: 4). Well, but the Law does not depend on faith. No, its words are, 'HE WHO HAS DONE THE DEEDS SHALL FIND LIFE IN THEM.'—(*Leviticus* 18: 5). From that curse, which is of the essence of the Law, we Jews have been ransomed only by Messiah: for He became 'The Accursed' for our sakes—you know it stands written, 'ACCURSED IS EVERY ONE WHO IS HANGED UPON A TREE.'—(*Deuteronomy* 21: 23). He so ransomed us in order that to the Gentiles might come, by their acceptance of Messiah Jesus, the blessing pronounced on Abraham, and in order that we through the exercise of faith may receive the realisation of the promise of the Spirit.

Brothers,—it is but an illustration drawn from social relations—still, even a contract between man and man, when once signed and sealed, cannot be set aside, or have new conditions inserted by any one. Now certain promises were uttered to Abraham, with reversion 'to his seed.' Note, that the words do not run 'and to thy seeds,' as though they applied to several individuals, but, with reference to a representative *one*, 'and to thy seed'—which can mean only the Messiah. Now I argue thus—here was a covenant originally ratified by God: the Mosaic Law, which only came into existence four hundred and thirty years later, cannot make it void, to the extent of annulling the promise. Yet these false teachers would have you

believe that it has done so; for, if our inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven depends on our observance of the Law, it has ceased to depend on faith in God's promise; whereas God did give it as a free gift to Abraham by virtue of a promise. 'What then,' I shall be challenged to say, 'was the purpose of the Law?' It was, I reply, super-added to that promise, to make men feel the guilt of their transgressions; and it was designed to operate until the coming of that Representative Seed to whom the promise had been given. It was enacted through the agency of angels, and was delivered through the hands of Moses, who was here the mediator between God and men. The office of a mediator, however, has its limitations: it gives him no authority to interfere retrospectively in another arrangement made by one sole party, who has no equals. But God, who gave that promise to Abraham, does stand alone—He has no equals. Therefore Moses' Law had no authority to override God's previous decree. 'Are then the Law and God's promises antagonistic?' I shall be asked. Away with the thought! I grant you, *if* there had been given a Law such as could avail to make the dead live, then in very truth would righteousness have had its fountain in that Law. But in point of fact Scripture has described all mankind as shut up in a prison, with sin for their gaoler, on purpose that the promise conditional on faith in Jesus the Messiah might be bestowed on all who believe in Him.

Yes, before the advent of this faith even we Jews were as men imprisoned, with Moses' Law for our warder, in preparation for the faith which was destined to be unveiled. Thus that Law has but been as the guardian-slave that watched over us till we were matured for Messiah, in order that by faith in Him we might be made righteous. Well, faith has now come, and so we are subject to the guardian-slave no longer. For now you are, all of you, mature sons of God by virtue of your faith in His Messiah, Jesus. Yes, all of you who have by baptism passed into union with Messiah have clothed yourselves with Messiah's personality. Under the new conditions there is no

distinction between Jew and non-Jew, between bondman and freeman, between male and female—all of you form one body in your union with Messiah Jesus. And if you are part of Messiah, it follows that you are Abraham's seed, and, by virtue of the promise 'to Abraham's seed,' are heirs of all its blessings.

IV

Speaking of heirs, I must observe that every heir, during the period of his legal infancy, is (even when he is, through his father's death, left prospective owner of all the estate) no more independent than any slave; but he is controlled by guardians of his person and by stewards of his property until his majority, as appointed in his father's will. The case of us Jews has been a parallel one: during the period of our infancy we were held in bondage, subject to the elementary teachings of a system of externalities. But when the period of waiting was fully completed, God sent forth on His mission His Son, the human offspring of a woman, and, by the conditions of His birth, subject to the Mosaic Law—sent Him on purpose that He might ransom from captivity all who were under the hand of the Law, that we might thus receive at His hands the charter of our sonship. And, to prove that you really are His sons, God sent forth from Himself the Spirit of His own Son, to pass into our hearts, there crying, 'My own dear Father!' Therefore you, who feel that Spirit, have ceased to be a bondsman: you are a son. And if you are His son you are also, through God's grace, heir to His riches.

But you Gentiles, in your former condition, since you knew not God, were bondslaves to things which, by their very nature, cannot be gods. Now, however, when you have recognised God as your Father,—or, I should rather say, have been recognised by God as members of His family,—how comes it that you are turning back again to those mere elementary teachings, impotent to help and soul-starving as they are, and that you are again willing to become slaves to them anew?

Here I find you studiously observing Sabbath-days, Seventh-months, festival-seasons, Sabbatical and Jubilee years. I am trembling for you, in the thought that all my labour on you may have been wasted!

Become as I am, by shaking off these shackles of formalism, I implore you, just as I, by shaking them off, became as you, my brothers, were. You have never wronged me yet: do not do so now. You remember how it was owing to physical infirmity that I came, on the first occasion, to proclaim to you the Glad-tidings. You remember what a trial to you was my bodily affliction; yet you did not scorn me, you did not loathe me; but as if I had been an angel of God you received me—nay, as if I had been Messiah Jesus Himself! What real ground was there, then, for your self-felicitation? I can testify for you that in those days, had it been possible, you would have torn out your very eyes and have given them to me. And have I become your foe through telling you the truth? These men are earnestly trying to win you, but for unworthy ends. No, they really want to shut you out from the pale of God's church, in order that you may earnestly try to win their favour, as though they held the keys of it. A good thing it were, indeed, that you should be earnestly sought, *for a worthy object*,—ay, always, and not only when I am among you to do it! Ah, my children, my own little ones! you for whom I am now enduring second travail-pangs, and shall endure, until Messiah's likeness be formed within you—oh that I might now be with you, and might speak in a different strain from this! I am full of despairing perplexity for you!

Answer me, you who are so eager to stoop under the yoke of the Mosaic Law—you are willing to listen to the records of that Law, are you not? Well, it there stands written, Abraham had two sons, one by the bondmaid, one by the free woman. The son born of the bondmaid was his natural son; the son born of the free woman was his by virtue of God's promise. These relations have a figurative interpretation. These two women are the two Covenants: the one delivered from Mount

Sinai, whose offspring are born to an inheritance of bondage—that is Hagar. Yes, the word ‘Hagar’ means, in Arabia, Mount Sinai: and she takes rank with the Jerusalem of our day; for she is, with her children, in bondage. But the Jerusalem on high (typified by Sarah) is free, and she is *our* mother. Yes, it stands written, ‘REJOICE, O BARREN ONE WHO ART NOT A MOTHER: BREAK FORTH INTO A SONG, AND SHOUT, O THOU WHO DOST NOT TRAVAIL: FOR MANY ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE LONE ONE, YEA, MORE THAN OF HER WHO HATH THE HUSBAND.’—(*Isaiah* 54: 1). We, my brothers, are of the true succession of Isaac: we are ‘the children,’ by virtue of God’s promise. Ay, and just as the natural son was wont to persecute the son born by the Spirit’s power, so it is still. But what does the Scripture say on this very point? CAST FORTH THE BONDMAID AND HER SON; FOR THE SON OF THE BONDMAID SHALL SURELY NOT SHARE THE INHERITANCE WITH THE SON OF THE FREE.’—(*Genesis* 21: 10). The application, brothers, is that *we* are not children of the bondmaid, but of the free wife.

V

On that liberty, for the right use of which Messiah has made us free men, do you take a firm stand. Do not again clog yourselves with the yoke of slavery.

I tell you—I, Paul—that, if you submit to be circumcised, Messiah will avail you not one whit. I solemnly testify to every man who undergoes circumcision, that he thereby assumes the position of a debtor, under bond to keep the Mosaic Law—the whole of it! You have cancelled your union with Messiah, you who are now basing your claim to righteousness on observance of the Law: you have banished yourselves from the free grace of God. *We* have not; for we, through His Spirit’s prompting, and through exercise of faith, are still waiting to see the fulfilment of our hope of righteousness. This hope is well-founded; for, in union with Messiah Jesus, neither is circumcision of any avail, nor is uncircumcision any disqualification: the faith which displays its efficacy through love,

is all-availing. You were running a noble race. Who has tripped up your feet, so that it is not the Truth to which you are now ready to yield obedience? The arguments that have so wrought on you were never inspired by Him who still bids you come to Him. The leaven introduced by these men, little as it seems, is leavening the whole mass of your church. But I trust—oh, I do trust, with regard to you in your union with our Lord, that you will accept no alien creed. He who is trying to unsettle you shall, whoever he may be, have the heavy burden of God's sentence on him to bear. As to the statement that I myself still proclaim the necessity for circumcision, how can they reconcile that with the Jews' persistent persecution of me? Why, in that case, the one feature of my teaching which is repulsive to them—the crucifixion of the Messiah—has become a non-essential. Oh that the apostles of bondage, who are disturbing your peace, would but act out fully their own principles, and mutilate themselves! I may well wish it, for it is to *freedom* that you have been called by God, my brothers. Only, do not make your liberty an excuse for leaving the sensual nature untrammelled: no, but by love's promptings become bondmen to one another. Yes, you can reconcile your freedom with the most perfect observance of the Mosaic Law; for the whole Law is fulfilled in the keeping of that one precept, 'THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF.'—(*Leviticus* 19: 18). But if, instead of that, you go on biting and devouring one another, beware lest you be utterly destroyed by one another.

I say to you, order your lives by the Spirit's guidance, and there will be no fear of your gratifying the cravings of your sensual nature. For the sensual nature passionately resists the Spirit, as does the Spirit the sensual nature: these two are mutually antagonistic, so that your good impulses are thwarted by the one, your evil by the other. But if you definitely surrender yourselves to the Spirit's guidance, you are then not under the Law, but on a higher plane. As for the acts prompted by the sensual nature they are unmistakable, such, for

instance, as fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery; all hatreds, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, intrigues, dissensions, factious parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and the like. I forewarn you, as I have already done, that those who practise such sins shall not be the heirs of God's kingdom. But the harvest of the Spirit's sowing is love, gladness, heart-peace, forbearance, kindness, benevolence, trustfulness, gentleness, self-control. It was not to curb such qualities as these that the Law was instituted. They who belong to Messiah Jesus have, by sharing in His death, thereby slain upon His cross their sensual nature, with its passions and its cravings.

Since it is by the power of the Spirit that we have our new life, by the guidance of the Spirit let us also order our conduct. Let us not grow conceited about our liberty, nor challenge one another to controversy, or envy each other's gifts.

VI

My brothers, even if a man have been detected in the commission of some positive transgression, do you in whom is God's Spirit reinstate such a man, in a spirit all gentleness. Look to yourself: you too may yet be tempted. Ever bear each other's burdens; fulfil in this way Messiah's Law of Love. If any of you thinks himself too big for such condescension (whereas he is really nothing exceptional), he is the victim of self-delusion. Let each man candidly appraise his own real services to the cause: then in his acts (not in some fancied superiority over his neighbour) will he find what legitimate ground there is, if any, for his boasting. Ah, there is not one but will find that he has his own load of sins and infirmities to bear!

Let him who is receiving instruction in the Word give ungrudgingly a share of his worldly goods to him who instructs him. Do not delude yourselves—God's claims are not to be dismissed with a sneer: whatever field a man sows, that, and none other, shall he reap. He who is sowing in the field of his

own sensual nature will from that sensual nature reap a harvest of moral degeneracy; but he who is sowing in the field of the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap a harvest of life eternal. But let us not grow discouraged in acting rightly; for at the proper season we shall reap that harvest, if we do not grow lax in our endeavours. So then, at every fit opportunity, let us treat all men with the kindness I spoke of, especially those who are members of the same household with ourselves, the household of faith.

I conclude in my own handwriting:—mark in what bold emphatic characters I have set it down!

To sum up—the sole object of all who are trying to force you to submit to circumcision is that they may wear a specious exterior in their unspiritual world, that they may evade the persecution which attends the preaching of a crucified Messiah. I know what I am saying: these very men who are circumcised are not themselves keeping the Mosaic Law. Their sole object in urging you to submit to circumcision is that they may boast of having set their mark upon your flesh. But never be it mine to boast of aught save of the Cross of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah, by whose death the world has died on that cross to me, and I have died to the world.

Circumcision is nothing; uncircumcision is nothing: the creation of a new nature in us is everything. Upon all who adopt this as the guiding principle of their lives may peace and mercy descend, ay, and upon all the TRUE Israel, the Israel of God.

Let no man hereafter harass me by misrepresentation: my character is beyond all challenge, for I bear on my very body the brands which proclaim me Jesus' bondman.

May the grace of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah, be with your spirit, my brothers. Amen.

THE LETTER TO THE ROMANS

[WRITTEN ABOUT 58 A.D.]

The Persons addressed. When, and by whom, the Christian church at Rome was founded, is not known. It may be that some of the Jews and Proselytes, who had gathered from all parts of the empire to Jerusalem, carried back the Gospel with them, after the Day of Pentecost, to the capital: it may be that some of those scattered by the persecution that followed Stephen's martyrdom travelled thither. With the constant intercourse between Rome and the provinces, Christianity was sure to arrive there sooner or later. The Jews were expelled from Rome by Claudius in 52 A.D., but they soon drifted back; and six years later were probably as numerous there as ever. By this time it may well be that the Gentile believers were in the majority in the Christian church at Rome.

Reason why it was written. Paul instinctively recognised the importance of its position as a centre of future influence: he knew that its numbers were rapidly increasing—Tacitus speaks of those martyred by Nero in 64 A.D. as a 'vast multitude,'—and was very anxious to visit this church (which counted among its members several whom he had known as members of other churches), and to establish its faith on the one true basis. Though this purpose was again and again frustrated, the departure of Phœbe from Corinth, where Paul was staying, gave him an opportunity of writing to the Roman church. The arguments of the letter to the Galatians were still fresh in his mind: he saw instinctively that the questions there dealt with were the questions on which the whole future of Christianity depended. He therefore set himself to elaborate those arguments and to marshal them into the most telling form,

making his letter so comprehensive as to cover both the Jewish and the Gentile position, alike matters of faith and matters of practice. The controversy taken up and settled in this letter may have only recently become acute at Rome. If the church there was in the first instance an offshoot from that at Jerusalem, these doctrines would not have been early developed among them. But in time there would be a large leaven of those who (especially during the banishment period) had elsewhere heard Paul's preaching; and there would be a certain antagonism between these and those of the Judaic party, news of which would in time reach Paul and warn him of the necessity for action.

It need not be supposed that the objections assumed by the writer to be raised were invented by himself. On the numerous occasions on which he had, as recorded in the Acts, 'argued in the synagogues,' he must have been again and again confronted with these and many besides. He probably quotes for refutation those objections which he thought his readers would find it most difficult to answer. Much of the letter reads like a reproduction of one of these synagogue-disputes. It is all vividly brought before us—the proud appeal to covenant-promises, the haughty claim of inherited moral superiority, the jealous championship of the Mosaic Law, the contemptuous application of the *reductio ad absurdum* argument,¹ the swift leap with which the opponent thought to thrust him on to the horns of a dilemma, the savage eagerness with which they tried to entrap him into 'blasphemy,' the indignant gasp with which they saw his most outrageous assertions anticipated in the very 'Law and the Prophets' to which they appealed. There can be no doubt that Paul was thoroughly familiar with all that could by any chance be urged against the doctrines he was establishing; and he meant to furnish the Roman church with a conclusive, an unanswerable reply.

¹ A passage in Chapter 8 would seem to suggest that he had once been met with the retort that, if he maintained that there was redemption for heathen savages, he might as well stretch his insane sympathy to the extent of saying that there was redemption for brutes also.

THE LETTER

I

I, Paul, who am a bondman of Jesus the Messiah, have been summoned by Him to act as His Apostle. I was singled out to proclaim the Glad-tidings of God, the same which He promised of old through His prophets, as recorded in the Sacred Writings. That Glad-tidings tells of His Son, who, in respect of His bodily nature, was born of David's seed; but in respect of His spiritual nature, a nature all holiness, He was expressly declared Son of God by a miracle of Divine Omnipotence. Yea, His Sonship was proved by the Resurrection of the Dead—the resurrection of Jesus the Messiah, our Lord. From His hands I have received my commission as apostle, and grace to exercise it, so as to lead men among all Gentile nations to that submission to Him which springs from faith, for the glory of His Name. Among such believers are you too numbered, you who have hearkened the call of Jesus the Messiah.

So to all God's dear ones who dwell in Rome, to all whom He has called to a consecrated life, I send this greeting—

Grace be to you, and heart-peace, the gifts of God our Father, and of our Lord, Jesus the Messiah.

In the first place, I offer through Jesus the Messiah thanks to my God for all of you. I thank Him that the story of your faith is told through all the world. God, whom I serve in the temple of my soul, to whom I offer for sacrifice the proclamation of the Glad-tidings of His Son, is witness for me, how unceasingly I make mention of you, always entreating in my prayers that I may at last, by God's good pleasure, be sped on my way to visit you. For I do long to see you: I want to share with you a gift of the Spirit's giving, so that your position may be strengthened—in other words, that we may, as I mingle with you, be encouraged by the influence of our faith on each other. I want you fully to understand, my brothers, that again and again I have purposed visiting you (but one thing and another has arisen to prevent me hitherto) in the hope of

finding a harvest of my labours among you, as I already do among the other Gentiles. I feel I have a debt to discharge, both to civilised Greeks and to the half-civilised outer world, both to the cultured and the uncultured. So strong is my eagerness to proclaim with all my energy the Glad-tidings to you also who dwell in Rome.

In the Glad-tidings there is no feature of which I am ashamed. It is the means through which God exerts His power for the salvation of every one who puts faith in the Message—of the Jew, as having the precedence, but of the Greek also. God's gift of righteousness is revealed in it, lifting men from one step of faith to another. This is the import of that passage of Scripture which says, 'IT IS FROM THE SOIL OF FAITH THAT THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL GROW UP INTO REAL LIFE.'—(*Habakkuk* 2: 4).

Sore need has the world of this message; for the wrath of God is ever being revealed from heaven to blast all godlessness and evil-living of men, who smother by their evil-living the germ of truth that they possess. O yes, they have in their own hearts a certain vision of the divine nature; in fact, it was God who so enlightened them. Invisible though He be, two distinctive attributes of His have been discerned through contemplation of His works, ever since the creation; I refer to His eternal power and His divine nature. Hence they have not the excuse of ignorance. They did know God; yet they rendered Him neither homage nor gratitude. Instead of that, they have lost themselves in mere speculations. Their souls, bereft of all faculty of clear vision, have been beclouded with darkness. They prate of their 'philosophy'—yet they have actually sunk into the folly of misrepresenting the majesty of the immortal God by making images of mortal men, nay, even of birds, of four-foot beasts, and of reptiles, and calling these representations of Him!

So the God whom they had bestialised abandoned them, sunk as they were in the lusts of their own hearts, to the thralldom of impurity, till they bestialised themselves with one

another. Rightly served were they, for perverting the true conception of God by a cloud of lies, for rendering homage and service to the thing created instead of its Creator—that Creator who is worthy to be blessed through all ages.

In retribution for this, that God delivered them over to the sway of infamous passions. Yes, their women actually perverted their natural function into an unnatural one! And, in like manner, the men neglected natural intercourse with women, and were set ablaze with lustful passion for one another, men on men perpetrating the deed of shame—ay, and receiving in their own bodies the wages of their transgression which they richly deserved.

And even as these abandoned the knowledge of God, so did God deliver them over to the promptings of a mind abandoned to itself, to the perpetration of hideous sins. They are steeped in every kind of iniquity, in villainy, in grasping greed, in malice: they reek with jealousy, with murder, with feuds, with treachery, with malignity: they are secret calumniators, they are open slanderers, heaven-aborred; they are overbearing, they are arrogant, they are braggarts; they are schemers of wrong, they are disobedient to parents. They have no sense of truth in themselves, no sense of honour in their dealings with others, no love for their own flesh and blood, no pity. So bad are they, that, though fully aware of God's decree, which ordains that all who practise such sins deserve death, yet not only do they perpetrate those deeds themselves, but even gloat over the practice of them by others.

II

So, then, whosoever you are, who, a mere man, presume to sit in judgment on your fellows, you are yourself a criminal, and that without a defence. In passing judgment on your fellow-sinner, you are passing sentence on yourself. Yes, you, the judge, habitually practise the same crimes. We know that the sentence of God—and it is in accordance with the evidence—is daily passed upon those who practise such actions. How?

Do you calculate on this—you who, mere man that you are, sit in judgment upon those who practise such actions, while you do them yourself—that you will yourself elude the judgment of God? Or, can it be that you are trifling with His kindness, His forbearance, His long-enduring patience, because they seem exhaustless? Do you ignore the fact that God's kindness is trying to draw you on to repentance? Are you determined, in the calousness and stubborn impenitence of your heart, to hoard up for your self a grim treasure of wrath, which shall blast you in the Day of the Wrath of God, when He unveils the terrors of His righteous judgment? Then 'HE WILL REQUIE EACH SEVERAL MAN EXACTLY AS HIS DEEDS DESERVE.'—(*Psalm* 62: 12). Some men are persevering in good actions, and so are following the path which leads to glory and honour and immortality: these He will repay with eternal life. Others are actuated by a spirit of factiousness: they disregard the promptings of truth, they follow the promptings of injustice: for them wait God's wrath and indignation, torment and despair. This requital awaits every living man who sets himself to do evil—the Jew (of course) taking precedence, and the non-Jew sharing his condemnation. But there wait glory and honour and heart-peace for every one who sets himself to do good, the Jew again taking precedence, and the non-Jew sharing the reward. There is no favouritism at God's bar. There will be strict justice—all who sinned in ignorance of Moses' Law shall, in their destruction, be allowed the plea of ignorance of that Law: all who sinned in the full light of that Law shall have to answer for every deviation from that Law. It is not those who merely listen to the reading of Moses' Law that will stand acquitted at God's bar, but those who perform its commands. Whenever it is found that Gentiles, though they may not possess Moses' Law, yet by the promptings of their nature do what the Law enjoins, it is ruled that these, as having no prescribed law, are a law to themselves, inasmuch as they give satisfactory evidence that the essential enactments of the Law are graven on their hearts, which are as it were a court of justice, where their conscience

appears as a witness on the side of the Law, and the arguments of reason encounter one another as counsel for the prosecution and defence. Such shall be the decision in that day when God judges men according to their secret motives, committing that judgment to Jesus the Messiah, just as is foretold in the Glad-tidings that I have proclaimed.

And you—you flaunt your name of Jew: you repose in privileged security on your possession of 'the Law': you boast of 'our God,' as though He were your private property: you have, forsooth, clear insight into His will: you are a casuist on nice points of interpretation, as a trained student of the Law. You have no misgivings as to *your* pretensions, proclaiming yourself 'the guide of the blind,' 'the light of those who grope in darkness,' 'instructor of dulness,' 'teacher of infancy,' as possessing in this Law of yours the one mould into which all illumination, all truth, must be run. Well now, you who are in perpetuity the instructor of your neighbour, are you neglecting self-instruction? You proclaim the commandment, 'THOU SHALT NOT STEAL'—are *you* a thief? You quote the ordinance, 'THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,'—are *you* an adulterer? You denounce idols as 'the abomination'—is it true that you filch the treasures from their temples? You, who so vaunt your monopoly of the Law, are you, by your transgression of the Law, habitually doing dishonour to your God? Yes, it is through you—*you*—that your God's name 'IS NAMED WITH CONTEMPT AMONG THE NATIONS'—(*Isaiah* 52: 5)—those are the very words of your own Scriptures. Circumcision!—O yes, it confers an advantage, *if* you practise the teachings of the Law. But if you are an habitual transgressor of the Law, your circumcision is null—you are to all intents and purposes uncircumcised. If, in fact, our uncircumcised Gentile does practically observe the ordinances of the Law, shall not he, for all that he is uncircumcised, be accounted as good as if he were circumcised? The man who is, physically speaking, uncircumcised, and who yet fulfils the Law, shall by his acts judge you, who, for all your possession of sacred documents, for all

your bodily sign of circumcision, are yet a transgressor of your Law. It is not the man who is a Jew in outward appearance who is really one. Neither is that true circumcision which is all outward appearance, a mere sign scored on the flesh. *He* is the Jew who is so in his secret soul; and his is the true circumcision—that of the heart, consisting in the Spirit's presence, not in observance of the written letter. Men may have no praise to bestow on such a man—God has.

III

What becomes, then, of the superiority of the Jew? What advantage was conferred with the institution of circumcision? Much, from every point of view. To begin with, in the long start that they had in the race for righteousness, through the fact that to their keeping were confided the revelations of God. Well, but some of them have lacked faith, in consequence of which God's promises have not been fulfilled to them as a nation. Does their unfaith argue then that God will not keep faith? Never! Let us be very sure that God is ever true to His word, though we should have to admit that no man can be relied on to keep faith. This is the thought behind David's words—' (I make this confession) AS ADMITTING THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THINE INDICTMENT, THE TRIUMPH OF THY JUSTICE OVER ALL IMPEACHMENT.'—(*Psalm* 51: 4).

'But (here I suppose the unenlightened human instinct to speak), if our unrighteousness does practically set God's righteousness in a clearer light, surely God acts unfairly by us in visiting our wrong-doing with His wrath!' Out upon the suggestion! Will the caviller dare to face the logical conclusion, and deny God's right to judge His own world?

'But,' the caviller may persist, 'if the truthfulness of God has been thrown into clearer relief by my falsity, and His glory has thus been enhanced, why should sentence be in spite of that passed on me, as on a malefactor? Should we not be justified in adopting as our principle of conduct, "Let us do evil that good may come?"' Indeed, this very slander is

current against us Christians: there are actually some who maintain that we avow this principle. My only reply to such blasphemers and calumniators is, that God will certainly condemn *them*, and justly too.

Well then, have we Jews *now* any real superiority? On the whole, no. We have already drawn up this indictment against both Jews and non-Jews, that they are all alike under the yoke of sin. In fact, it so stands recorded in the Scriptures—'THERE IS NOT EVEN SO MUCH AS ONE RIGHTEOUS MAN. THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, NONE WHO SEEKS AFTER GOD. THEY HAVE ALL SWERVED FROM THE TRUE PATH; THEY ARE IN A CONSPIRACY OF WORTHLESSNESS. THERE IS NONE THAT PRACTISES GOOD CONDUCT—NOT SO MUCH AS ONE!'—(*Psalms* 14: 1-3). 'A YAWNING GRAVE IS THEIR THROAT: WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY HAVE PRACTISED TREACHERY': 'THE VENOM OF ASPS LURKS UNDER THEIR LIPS':—(*Psalms* 5: 9; 140: 3)—'THEIR MOUTH IS CHARGED WITH CURSING AND BITTER HATE.'—(*Psalms* 10: 7). 'SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD ARE THEIR FEET: RUIN AND WRETCHEDNESS MARK THEIR TRACK, AND THE PATH OF PEACE HAVE THEY NEVER KNOWN.'—(*Isaiah* 59: 7, 8). 'THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES.'—(*Psalms* 36: 1). We cannot pretend that all this has no application to us Jews. Everybody knows that all the denunciations of the Mosaic Law are of course addressed to Jews, as being the only persons amenable to that Law. Every murmur is consequently hushed, and all humanity finds itself subject still to God's jurisdiction. For, when all humanity is tried at His bar, the verdict of innocence will not depend on the question whether they have in every case fulfilled the requirements of the Mosaic Law. In fact, the real function of that Law is but to awaken the human conscience in relation to sin.

But now we have a new revelation—the offer of God's gift of righteousness quite independently of obedience to the Mosaic Law. And this revelation is actually attested by that very Law, and by the words of the Prophets as well. This righteousness of God's bestowal is attained through trust in

Jesus the Messiah, and is vouchsafed only to those who believe in Him. We find no distinction made. All—Jew as well as Gentile—have committed sin: all lag far behind the attainment of the glory of the Vision of God. They can obtain acquittal only as an act of charity, an act of free grace on His part. Now this act of grace is made possible by the ransom paid for them in the person of the Messiah, of Jesus. God ordained Him from of old to be the atonement for a world's sin. The essence of this atonement consisted in the shedding of His blood: the channel whereby we profit by it is faith in Him: the effect is a new revelation of God's justice. He suspended judgment on the sins of that former period, the period of His forbearance, with a view to the revelation of His justice under this new dispensation, when He, while remaining a just judge, can actually acquit the sinner who makes faith in Jesus his plea.

Well, what has become of the vaunted superiority of the Jews? The doors of God's justice-hall are shut in its face. By virtue of what clause in God's law? Because they have not performed the deeds prescribed? Not that; but because they have not exercised the faith prescribed.

We arrive at the conclusion that a man must gain his verdict of acquittal by exercising faith, the plea of performance of legal ordinances being invalid. After this, can it be maintained that God is the God of the Jews exclusively? Is He not quite as much the God of the Gentiles? Most certainly He is. He must be, if it be true that God is one, and not dual. He will acquit of guilt alike the circumcised Jew who relies only on the exercise of faith, and the uncircumcised Gentile who approaches Him only through the gate of faith.

'Why, you are making the Law,' I shall be told, 'a mere nullity by making this faith of yours everything!' Nothing of the kind. I tell you, I am fixing the Law firmly upon its true foundation.

IV

‘What are we to say, then, of Abraham, our first father, whose blood is in all our veins?—does it appear that he really obtained nothing at all from God?’ will be the Jew’s challenge. I answer—if it shall appear that Abraham was pronounced righteous in consequence of his performance of deeds specified in the Law, then he has something to claim merit for. But this is an impossible relation of man to God. Nor had Abraham this; for what *does* the Scripture really say on this point? Here are the words—‘HE BELIEVED—Abraham exercised *faith* in God—AND THAT WAS SET DOWN TO HIS ACCOUNT AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.’—(*Genesis* 15: 6). Well now, when a man performs a piece of work, his account for wages is not made out as for an unearned gift, but as a debt due to him. On the other hand, if a man does no work at all, but steadily trusts in Him who pronounces the erewhile godless man righteous, then it must be the man’s *faith* which appears in his account as righteousness.

David’s language furnishes an exact parallel—he is describing the blessed state of the man whom God credits with righteousness (without stipulating performance of acts prescribed by the Law), and he says, ‘BLESSED ARE THEY WHOSE TRANSGRESSIONS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED OVER! BLESSED IS THE MAN TO WHOM THE LORD SHALL NOT IMPUTE SIN.’—(*Psalms* 32: 1, 2). I ask you, is there anything here about the blessing descending only upon the circumcised man? Dare you deny that it is also pronounced on the uncircumcised man? Why, it is proved from the quotation already given. I repeat it: ‘HIS FAITH WAS CREDITED TO ABRAHAM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.’ Now, at what period in his history was it so credited? In his circumcised state, or in his uncircumcised state? Not in the former, but in the latter. As for circumcision, it was simply as a *sign* that he received it, as the attesting seal of the righteousness springing from his faith, which he already possessed in his uncircumcised condition. It follows that, so far from being the exclusive

father of the Jews, he is the father of *all* who, in a similar uncircumcised state, so believe that they too are credited with righteousness. Of course he remains father of the circumcised Jews, not, however, as circumcised men, but only in so far as they follow the path of that faith of our father Abraham which he exercised in his uncircumcised state. In fact, the Mosaic Law was not the channel through which the promise came to Abraham, nor to his seed either—the promise that he should be the heir of the world. It came through that righteousness which is the outcome of faith. Why, if those who rely on the Mosaic Law are the heirs specified, this faith is emptied of all significance, and that promise becomes nugatory. The immediate effect of Law is anger of the law-maker against the law-breaker; whereas, where there is no law defining limits of conduct, it is impossible to transgress non-existent limits. For this reason the promise was made conditional on faith simply, that its fulfilment might be a matter of God's free grace, the consequence being that the aforesaid promise was securely settled on *all* Abraham's offspring—not on those alone who adhere to the performance of the Law, but especially on those who rely on faith, just such as Abraham exercised. In this sense he is the father of us all ('AS A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I ORDAINED THEE'—is the Scripture expression) in the eyes of Him whose promise he believed, that is, of God, who can make the dead live again, and who is continually anticipating the birth of things that give as yet no token of existence. And so Abraham, though it was a thing transcending all hope, yet made hope the foundation for such a faith that he did become 'Father of many nations,' in accordance with the promise uttered, 'countless as yonder stars shall thine offspring be.' Nay, his faith was not weakened when he took note of his own physical condition—a man with one foot in the grave (he was some hundred years old)—and the loss of vital power in Sarah's womb. But, when he turned his eyes towards the promise of God, there came no distrust to make him waver. Nay, rather it was by that faith that he was filled with virile

vigour, when once he had, by this trusting in God, rendered glory to Him, and was possessed by the conviction that God can perform whatever He has promised. That is why 'it was set down to his account as righteousness.' Those words stand recorded not for his honour merely, but for our benefit also. For we shall be similarly credited with righteousness, we, I mean, who have faith in that God who raised from the dead Jesus, the Messiah, who is our Lord, and who was surrendered to death to atone for our sins, and was raised from the dead in proof of the acquittal we had obtained by His death.

V

Since, then, from this faith we have attained to righteousness, let us enjoy peace with God. We can procure it now through our Lord Jesus the Messiah. Through Him, too, we have been introduced by this door of faith into the favour of God in which we have so firm a footing: yes, and we are exulting in the hope of something higher yet, the glory of God's presence. I will go further, and say that we actually exult in such afflictions as ours, knowing as we do that affliction develops unflinching endurance; that endurance develops tested strength, and tested strength develops the habit of hope.

This hope is no delusive one, as is proved by the fact that the brimming river of God's love has already overflowed into our hearts, on-drawn by His Holy Spirit, which He has given to us. It was given in all its might after our Messiah had died for godless men at the time ordained—ah, we were weak indeed ere then! A marvellous sacrifice this! for one can hardly imagine that any one would consent to give his life for another, even for a righteous man—'hardly,' I say; since perhaps for an ideally good man another *might* bring himself to die. But think, O think what utter love is that of God toward us which He proves by the fact that Messiah died for us while we were sinners still! If He did that for us then, much more now, when we have actually been adjudged righteous in virtue of the spilling of His blood, shall we be delivered by His

hand from that wrath of which I have spoken. This is a fair inference; for, if, while we were still God's enemies, peace was made between us and Him by means of the death of His Son, much more may we expect, now that this peace has been made, that in the life of His Son we shall find shelter from all future wrath. Nay, we have more than a sense of security: we even exult in a new life in God, which has come through our Lord Jesus the Messiah, from whose hands we have received this our charter of peace.

The outcome of this is the inauguration of a New Era. The error of one individual man made the breach through which sin entered our world; and in the track of sin came death. So it was that death passed through that door to assail all men, since they all sinned. Of course, sin did exist as a *fact* in the world before the institution of Law: only, sin is not set down to a man's account as *guilt*, so long as there is no law prohibiting certain acts. Yet, from the days of the first man to the days of the first law-giver, physical death was king over the lives of men, even of those whose sin (inasmuch as it was not against a definite prohibition) was different in kind from that of Adam. This First Man of the Old Life prefigures the destined First Man of the New Life: each gave a gift to humanity—the former, the death-fraught transgression, the latter, the free gift of Life. But note, that transgression and this free gift are in inverse proportion. Through that one man's trespass the myriads of humanity died, I grant you: yet the disproportion is as nothing to the measureless overflowings to the myriads of humanity of the fountain of the grace of God, and of His bounty conveyed by the grace embodied in this one Man, Jesus the Messiah. No, the bounty now bestowed is not commensurate with the mischief that came from that one man's sin. On that one man's sin followed a sentence that meant humanity's condemnation: but here on all its countless sins follows a free gift of God that means humanity's acquittal. If, in consequence of that single first transgression, death became king of men's lives, through the one man's demerit,

all this will be far more than compensated when those who receive the measureless wealth of God's grace and God's gift of righteousness shall be kings in the New Life, through the merit of the One, Jesus the Messiah. To sum up the argument—as that single transgression of Adam resulted in condemnation for all men then, so this single righteous act of Jesus results in an acquittal that bestows life upon all men now. Yes, as through the disobedience of that one man the myriads of humanity were enrolled in the host of sin, so, conversely, through the obedience of this One Man, the myriads of humanity shall be enrolled in the host of the righteous. 'Had the Mosaic Law then no place in the purposes of God?' I may be asked. I reply, the Law came in as a provisional measure: its multiplicity of enactments educated the human conscience by creating a multiplicity of offences; but, however much the catalogue of human sins has been swelled, God's pardoning grace has made more than ample provision for all. The consequence is, that, just as sin once wielded kingly power in inflicting death, so grace shall henceforth wield kingly power in bestowing that righteousness which issues in eternal life for humanity—life attained through Jesus, through the Messiah, through our Lord—ours!

VI

'But,' my opponents retort, 'if this grace bears such a transcendent ratio to the sin, why not continue sinning and sinning, in order that this grace on which you lay such stress may go on increasing at a still faster rate?' Out upon the suggestion! How is the case possible?—we have passed out of sin as truly as the dead man has passed out of life: can we, when thus dead to it, still go on living in it? Or, if you fail to grasp this inference, look at it thus: do you not comprehend that all of us, who passed by baptism into union with Messiah Jesus, were by baptism made sharers in His death? Well then, if that baptism made us share His death, it must have made

us share His burial too. It must follow that, as Messiah was raised from among the dead by means of the descent of His Father's glory, so we too, who rose with Him, are to be employed wholly in the activities of the New Life. For if, by having died like Him, we have entered into living union with Him, most certainly we shall not be less so in consequence of having risen with Him. This we recognise, that our former self was nailed to His cross with Him, so that that body which was the instrument of sin might be made impotent for evil, so that we *could not* any longer be slaves of sin. You know, the man who has died is incapable of sinning, as much so as if he were perfectly righteous. Well, if we have died along with Messiah (and have so been accounted righteous), we have a right to believe that we shall also share His new life. For we know that Messiah, after having once risen from the dead, can never die again; death can never more claim lordship over Him. In respect of His death, He passed by dying, once for all, out of the sphere of sin; but, in respect of His new life, He is in living relation to God. In the same manner you also are to account yourselves to be, in relation to sin, dead men; but in relation to God, living men, whose life is absorbed in the life of the Messiah, Jesus. Oh then, do not suffer sin to sit throned in your mortal part, your body, so that this should grovel in subjection to its own passions! Do not continue to enrol your members as weapons of wickedness under the banner of sin. Nay, enrol yourselves once for all under the banner of God, as men who are now alive, though erewhile dead: and your members, enrol them as weapons for righteousness to wield under the banner of God. No! sin will no more have lordship over you; for you are henceforth not subjects of the Law: you are subjects of the Kingdom of Grace.

'Ah then,' my opponents will cry, 'we may safely sin, since we are not under the uncompromising rule of the Law, but under the lenient sceptre of grace!' Out upon the suggestion! Can you not see that, if you deliberately deliver yourselves into thralldom to any master, under compact to obey him, you

have thereby surrendered your free will; that you are thenceforth very thralls to him whom you undertake to obey? This applies in either case—thralls of sin, which leads down to death, or thralls of obedience to God, which leads up to righteousness. Thank God! your thralldom to sin is a thing of the past: you have rendered allegiance—from the heart you have rendered it—to the New Teaching, the mould into which you have let your nature be run. You have been emancipated from sin; you have made yourselves thralls to righteousness. In using the word ‘thralls,’ I am but employing a figure drawn from human relations, as a concession to the very human weakness of your comprehension. Well, as I said, you did once surrender your members to be thralls to impurity and lawlessness, to sink to all depths of lawlessness. So now surrender these your members to be thralls to righteousness, to rise to all heights of holiness! When you were thus thralls to sin, you were, in relation to righteousness, free men—it had no control over your life. I ask you, then—what harvest did you reap in those days from actions at the memory of which you now blush? None—for the goal to which those things led was death! But now, you have been emancipated from sin, you have become thralls to God: you are reaping a harvest, your own—its ingathering shall be holiness: the goal shall be life, eternal life. Ah, the pittance-wage that sin doled out to you was death;¹ but the lavish bounty of God is life eternal, involved in your union with the Messiah, with Jesus our Lord—ours!

VII

I cannot suppose you to be ignorant, my brothers, (since I am addressing men who have some insight into law) that the

¹ There is possibly a military metaphor here:—the contrast between the soldiers’ ordinary pay, the smallness and irregular payment of which gave rise to constant grumbling and occasional mutiny, and the donative, or largesse, of the emperor on his accession, which was sometimes (e.g., on the accession of the reigning emperor, Nero) for political reasons, very large.

law claims control over a man only up to the end of his life. For instance, a married woman is bound by law to her husband so long as he lives. But if her husband dies, the legal claim of her husband over her is annulled. Well, if, during the life of her husband, she marry another man, she will be stigmatised as an adulteress; but if her husband has died, she is unfettered by any legal claim, so that, though she marry another man, yet she is no adulteress. Your case, my brothers, is a parallel one: you have by the death (in which, as I said, you participated) of the body of the Messiah, become, in relation to the Law, dead men, so that you have passed under the control of Another, of Him who was raised from the dead in order that we might yield the harvest of our life to God. For, when we were in our former unspiritual state, those stirrings of appetite that lead to what the Law constitutes sins were a constantly actuating force in our members, making us yield a harvest for death's reaping. But now the Law's claim on us is annulled: we have escaped by death from that which held us prisoners; and hence, while we are indeed in thrall still, it is under the new conditions of obedience to the Spirit's promptings not under the old conditions of obedience to hard-and-fast written regulations.

But my opponents may urge, 'Your argument then implies that the Law and Sin are practically identical.' No—no! What I say is, that I should not, except through the agency of the Law, have had any consciousness of sin. For instance, I should, in gratifying desire, have had no guilty consciousness of lust, if the Law did not reiterate, 'Thou shalt not lust after this or that.' But non-moral sin took advantage of the opening given by that legal prohibition to become moral guilt, and made my whole inner nature one hot-bed of lust. For, but for Law, sin could have had no vital influence on character. There was a time when I lived unconscious of Law—an animal life. The commandment came: sin became, from a latent, an active force, which meant death for me. Thus I found that that legal ordinance, which was designed to point the way to life,

actually thrust me down to death. It was all sin's doing: this it was that seized the opportunity given by the ordinance, entrapped me, and, using the Law as a weapon, killed me. So in itself the Law is a holy thing, and each ordinance is holy and just and beneficent. 'So then,' one may retort, 'this beneficent thing became to you a deadly poison?' No—no! I tell you, it was *sin* which, that its mischievous effect might be thrown into clear relief, used that beneficent thing as a weapon with which to kill me. And so the unutterable malignity of sin is shown by its perversion of the good, the legal ordinance. The Law is an effluence of God's Spirit: I am a creature of flesh, who have been sold, as though by man-stealers, into thralldom under sin. So real a thing is this thralldom of the body, that I hardly recognise my responsibility for my own actions. I do not find that I follow the line of conduct that I have purposed. I catch myself doing the very thing that I abhor. Well but, if my true self protests while I am in the very act of doing it, then I am surely taking sides with the Law, acknowledging that it is right. In that case, it is no longer I—my true self—who do that deed: it is the sin which haunts me. I fully recognise that in my other self—in my animal nature—no good finds a home. I feel the insistence of the good intention; but the power of translating into action the good intention—alas, no! Ah, it is not the good which I intend that I do: it is the evil which I do not intend that I am ever doing. Well, but if I do the very thing that I do not intend, it is no longer I—my true self—who perpetrate the deed: it is the sin that haunts me. Why then, I have got a clue to a law of my being—this, that while my true self intends to do what is right, I am subject to the insistent pressure of evil. My true inner self takes sides gladly with the Law of God. Yet I can discern a very different law of my being haunting my body. It is carrying on incessant war against the law of my will: it is dragging me away a captive in the chains of that law of sin which haunts my body. Alas and alas for me! who shall rescue me from the obsession of the body, from this living

death? Thank God!—oh, I thank God that He does: He does it through the agency of Jesus, our Messiah, our Lord! Ah well, then, in my true self, in my will, I am thrall to the Law of God: it is but in my animal nature that I am thrall to the law of sin.

VIII

No sentence of condemnation, therefore, can lie against those whose life is a union with the Messiah, with Jesus. For the Law of the Spirit, which breathes a life absorbed into that of the Messiah Jesus, has emancipated me—the erewhile thrall—from the law of sin, of death. The Mosaic Law found the task impossible: it was impotent to control the animal nature. God took it up; He sent to earth His own Son in the exact semblance of our sin-ridden animal nature, sent Him as a sin-offering; and so pronounced sentence of death on that sin which haunted our animal nature. Thus He made it possible for us to fulfil the righteous demands of His law, now that we order our lives, not according to the promptings of our animal nature, but according to the drawings of His Spirit. Men whom the animal nature sways have animal tendencies: men whom the spiritual nature sways have spiritual tendencies. In fact, the tendency of the animal nature is to death, that of the spiritual nature is to life and heart-peace. For the tendency of the animal nature is hostile to God. It does not subject itself to the Law of God: in fact, it is incapable of doing so. Those in whom the animal nature has the upper hand cannot please God. You, however, are not controlled by your animal nature, but by the Spirit of God, if God's Spirit really has its home in you. But if a man has not the Messiah's Spirit, no follower of the Messiah is he. On the other hand, if the Messiah lives in you, then, dead as your bodily self may be through sin, your spirit is instinct with life through the power of righteousness. If the Spirit of God, of Him who raised Jesus from the dead, has its home in you, then He who raised the Messiah Jesus from the dead will thrill with a new life

your very bodies—those mortal bodies of yours—by the agency of His own Spirit, which now has its home in you.

Well then, brothers, we now lie under an obligation, not to our animal nature, not to live according to our animal impulses: for, if you go on living so, you shall surely die. But if, through the Spirit's help, you keep crushing out of life the misdeeds prompted by the body, then you will really live. Only those who submit themselves to the guidance of God's Spirit are God's sons. No servile spirit, no cringing spirit, is it that you have accepted this time: no, you have accepted a spirit which gives you the status of sons, in the rapture of which we cry, 'My Father, my own dear Father!' This very Spirit adds its testimony to that of our own spirit, telling us that we are God's children. If we are His children, it must follow that we are His heirs—yes, heirs to God's wealth, co-heirs with the Messiah! Only, to share His glory, we must also be prepared to share His sufferings.

Ah well, as I estimate them, all sufferings that can betide in this life's span are not worth taking into account compared with the glory that is destined to be unveiled before our eyes. The eager yearning of all created things is waiting, waiting now for that unveiling of the Vision of the sons of God. All created beings have had to submit to a seeming purposeless existence—not of their own choice, but subserving some great design of Him who so hath overruled all lives,—yet haunted ever by a hope that they also, even *all* God's creation, shall at last be emancipated from this thralldom to decay, shall at last emerge into the liberty of that glorious state which is the heritage of the sons of God. All God's sentient universe, I trow, is sighing with one great voice, is suffering travail-throes, from of old until now. Nay, nor that alone—ourselves too, though our hands already grasp the firstfruits of the Spirit, yet are we sighing too, our very hearts are sighing, whilst we strain our gaze afar to descry that ransom of our mortal frame, the sealing of us as His sons. By that hope uplifted have we found deliverance. Yet hope once realised has passed beyond

the sphere of hope—who hopes on for the thing he has already realised? Ah, but if we are hoping, hoping still for the boon as yet unrealised, then with unwearying patience we wait for it from afar.

Yes, and His Spirit too—for His compassion matches our yearning—is ever taking our human frailty by the hand. *We* are not even sure what boons should rightly be the object of our prayers; but His Spirit—His very Spirit—is pleading ever for us with sighings such as no language can shape into words. Ah, but He who tracks the labyrinth of the heart needs no words to divine what the Spirit means: He knows that His Spirit intercedes for His hallowed ones in just the way that God desires. And sure am I, that, on those who love God, all things are with one purpose working to bring blessings—yes, on those to whom, according to His providential plan, He has cried ‘Come ye to me!’ Long ere this He knew our hearts, long ere this He claimed us (as a man claims property by setting his landmarks thereon) as those whom He should mould into the very likeness of His own Son, so that he should have many brothers, Himself the first-born. And to us whom so He called He gave righteousness: and us, to whom He has given righteousness, He has crowned with glory too. In face of all this, what remains for us to say?

HYMN OF TRIUMPH IN JESUS

If God is on our side,
What matters who is against us?
He who spared not His own Son,
But surrendered Him to suffering for us all,
How can He but, in giving Him, lavish on us all things—all?
Who shall dare arraign God’s chosen ones?
God saith I am righteous—who dares condemn me to death?
There is One who has died for me—our Messiah Jesus!
Died?—nay, He has risen from the dead:
He is throned at God’s right hand:

Yea, He is now interceding for me!
 Who shall sever us from Messiah's love?
 Shall affliction?—shall anguish?—shall persecution?—
 Shall famine?—shall privation?—
 Shall peril?—shall the beheading sword?—
 Ay, we are as they of whom it stands written,
 'For Thy sake are we massacred all through the day:
 We have been accounted as mere sheep told off for the
 shambles.'

Yet, amidst all this, *we* are the victors—
 Ay, more than victors, in the might of Him who hath loved us!
 Yea, of this am I persuaded:—
 Neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels—
 No, not the Celestial Hierarchy,
 Not 'they that excel in strength'—
 Nor the present world, nor the world to come;
 Not the height of Heaven,
 Not the abyss of Hades,
 Nor aught else in God's creation,
 Shall avail to sever us from the love of God,
 The love incarnated in the Messiah, in Jesus,
 Our Lord—ours!

IX

Truth unfeigned is this—I speak by our Messiah's inspiration, and my own conscience, prompted by the Holy Spirit, appears as witness for me—that bitter sorrow is mine, and anguish that gives my heart no respite. Fain, O fain would I be myself the accursed scapegoat, driven from our Messiah's presence, if so I might deliver my brothers, those who are my own flesh and blood—the Jews! For they are the sons of Israel: theirs was the sonship of God, theirs the Glory of the Visible Presence. With them were His covenants made; to them the Law was given. To them was revealed the Temple-ritual, to them the promises. Theirs were the Patriarch-fathers:

yes, and, in so far as He is human, theirs is the Messiah.¹ God, who is supreme over all, be blessed evermore for this! Amen.

But, mark, I am not implying that God's promise 'to *Israel*' has been stultified. The truth is, that it is not all the descendants of Jacob that comprise the true *Israel*. The fact that certain men are by blood 'the seed of Abraham,' does not constitute them all *his sons*. That is proved by the words, 'THE LINE OF ISAAC ONLY SHALL BE CALLED THY SEED.'—(*Genesis* 21:12). This amounts to saying that it is not Abraham's children by blood alone who are the *children of God*. It is only those children to whom the promise applied that can be reckoned as 'Abraham's seed.' I say 'promise,' for the language of promise it certainly was—'ABOUT THIS TIME NEXT YEAR I WILL VISIT THEE, AND SARAH SHALL HAVE A SON.'—(*Genesis* 18: 10). Sarah, observe; though Abraham had other wives. The limitation did not stop there; but, when Rebecca, too, was with child by that one son of Abraham (Isaac our father)—when there were two sons as yet unborn, who had so far done no good or evil deed, God said to her, 'THE ELDER SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE YOUNGER.'—(*Genesis* 25: 23). In accordance with this is His other declaration, 'JACOB I LOVED, BUT ESAU I HATED.'—(*Malachi* 1: 2, 3). Why was this? I answer, it was to establish the principle that God's purpose, as shown in His choice of one man rather than another, is unconditional, that it depends, not on men's deeds, but on the good pleasure of Him who calls them to Himself.

Shall I be met with the demand, 'Do you dare insinuate that partiality—*injustice*, in fact—is an attribute of God?' Away with the thought! God's decision is beyond challenge:

¹ Another reading—'Messiah, who is supreme over all—God blessed for evermore.' The great difficulty in the way of accepting this punctuation (and it must be remembered that the most ancient manuscripts have no stops at all) is that Paul nowhere else calls Jesus *God over all*, nor does he ever apply to Him the word *εὐλογητός*. He never approaches nearer to this than in *Philippians* 2: 6; *Colossians* 1: 15; 2: 9; *First Corinthians* 8: 6; *Second Corinthians* 4: 4. Of course, *First Timothy* 3: 16, would conclusively meet such objections, could *Θεός* be accepted as the true reading.

He says to Moses, 'I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOMSOEVER I HAVE MERCY: I WILL COMPASSIONATE WHOMSOEVER I COMPASSIONATE.'—(*Exodus* 33: 19). This shows that God's mercy does not depend on human will, or on human effort, but on His own fiat. Scripture records His message to Pharaoh—'FOR THIS VERY END DID I RAISE UP THEE, EVEN TO DISPLAY IN THEE MY OWN POWER, AND THAT THROUGH THEE MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGH ALL THE EARTH.'—(*Exodus* 9: 16). It follows, then, that God shows mercy to whomsoever He will, and whomsoever He will He confirms in their stubbornness. My opponent may retort, 'How, in that case, can He blame *us* for inevitable sins?—who has ever withstood His constraining purpose?' I reply with a more fitting question—Who are you, that you, mere human creature that you are, dare arraign God? How? SHALL THE MOULDED MATERIAL SAY TO HIM WHO MOULDED IT, 'WHY DIDST THOU FASHION ME INTO THIS FORM?'—(*Isaiah* 45: 9). Has not the potter the clay at his absolute disposal, to fashion of the same paste the one vessel for noble, the other for ignoble uses? Granting that God—while fully intending to show how awful His wrath can be, and to reveal all His irresponsible power—yet bore very patiently with those vessels that brimmed with His wrath, and which were already made fit for destruction, and thus acted, too, in order to make known the wealth of the glory that He poured over those vessels which He flooded with His mercy—vessels which He had already prepared to stand in the light of His glory—ourselves, I mean, whom He has called to Himself, has called not only from among the Jews, but also from among the Gentiles—if He has done this and that, dare you challenge His action? It was His ancient purpose: He says in the prophecy of Hosea, 'I WILL CALL THE PEOPLE THAT WAS NOT MINE "MY OWN PEOPLE": I WILL CALL HER "MY BELOVED" WHO WAS NO BELOVED OF MINE THEREFORE.'—(*Hosea* 2: 23). 'AND IT SHALL BE, THAT, IN THE LAND WHERE IT WAS SAID TO THE INHABITANTS, "NO FOLK OF MINE ARE YE," THERE SHALL THEY BE CALLED "SONS OF GOD, THE

LIVING GOD." '—(*Hosea* 1: 10). Again, let us hear how the cry of Isaiah peals over Israel—'THOUGH THE NUMBER OF ISRAEL BE NOW AS THE SAND OF THE SEA, IT IS BUT A REMNANT OF THEM THAT SHALL BE SAVED; FOR GOD SHALL CLOSE HIS RECKONING WITH MEN, YEA, SHALL CUT IT SHORT.'—(*Isaiah* 10: 22, 23). In the same strain Isaiah speaks yet again—'IF THE LORD OF HOSTS HAD NOT LEFT US A MERE GERM FOR FUTURE GROWTH, OUR NATION WOULD HAVE DISAPPEARED AS UTTERLY AS SODOM, WE SHOULD HAVE VANISHED LIKE GOMORRAH.' (*Isaiah* 1: 9).

What conclusion, then, shall we draw? This—that the Gentiles, who never ran in the race for righteousness, have yet grasped the prize of righteousness: but it is the righteousness attained through faith. On the other hand, Israel, who did run the race for righteousness, but on the track of the Law, actually failed to reach the goal of the Law. Why so? Because they shaped their course not by faith, but in reliance on meritorious deeds. There was a stone set in mid-course to baulk the unwary feet, and they stumbled against it. It so stands recorded—'BEHOLD, I SET IN ZION'S MIDST A STONE THAT HER SONS SHALL STUMBLE ON, A ROCK FROM WHICH THEY SHALL RECOIL: YET—YET, HE WHO RESTS HIS FAITH THEREON SHALL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.'—(*Isaiah* 28: 16).

X

My brothers, my heart's yearning, my entreaty to God, for my own people, is that they may yet be saved. I can bear witness to their jealousy for God's honour: but I say that it is unenlightened. They steadily ignore the righteousness which God demands; they try to set up a private standard of righteousness, and so have practically rebelled against the righteousness of God. The whole Law, in fact, leads up to the Messiah as the source of righteousness for every one who trusts in Him. Moses, for instance, writes regarding the righteousness attained by observance of the Law, 'THE MAN WHO FULFILS ITS REQUIREMENTS (*which no man ever did*) SHALL FIND

LIFE IN IT.’—(*Leviticus* 18: 5). But here is the language describing the righteousness attained by faith:—‘SAY NOT THOU IN THINE HEART, “WHO SHALL ASCEND UP TO THE HEAVEN?”’ (meaning, to bring down thence the Messiah, the incarnate Word)—OR, “WHO SHALL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS OF HADES?”’—(meaning to bring up from the dead the Messiah, the incarnate Word): but what does it say? This—‘THE WORD IS CLOSE TO THEE, ON THY LIPS, AND IN THINE HEART.’—(*Deuteronomy* 30: 12-14). This is the Word, the subject of our faith, which we proclaim. We proclaim that, if on your lips be the acknowledgement of Jesus as your Lord, and in your heart the belief that God did really raise Him from the dead, you shall find salvation. For with the inmost heart must we believe, as the first step towards attaining righteousness; but secret belief will not suffice—with the lips must the profession of that belief be made, as the indispensable condition for salvation. The Scripture bears me out: it says, ‘NO ONE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL BE DISAPPOINTED.’—(*Isaiah* 28: 16). *No one*, observe—no distinction here between Jew and non-Jew. The same great Being is Lord of them all: His hands are full of blessing for *all* who at any time call upon Him. ‘EVERY ONE,’ it says again, ‘WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED.’—(*Joel* 2: 32). Well now, tell me this—first how is it possible for men to call upon a Lord in whom they have never yet believed?—secondly, how can men believe in a Lord of whom they have never yet heard?—thirdly, how can men have heard of Him, except from the lips of His own herald?—fourthly, how can any do the office of heralds, unless they have been so commissioned by the Lord—as *we* have been? To *us* that Scripture refers, ‘HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THEM THAT PROCLAIM GLAD-TIDINGS OF BLESSINGS!’—(*Isaiah* 52: 7).

Alas! all have not given heed to the Glad-tidings. It has ever been so. Isaiah says of his own message, ‘LORD, WHO HATH BELIEVED THAT WHICH HE HEARD FROM ME?’—(*Isaiah* 53: 1). It follows, that belief must depend upon having heard

the Message; and the only Message possible is the proclamation of the Messiah. Again, can men say they have not heard it? They cannot!—else, what means this, ‘THE VOICE OF HIS HERALDS WENT FORTH THROUGH ALL THE EARTH; UNTO THE FAR LIMITS OF THE WORLD WENT THEIR MESSAGE?’—(*Psalms* 19: 4). Well, but, ‘Perhaps Israel had no warning of this Calling of the Gentiles?’ He had. Moses, to begin with, says, ‘I WILL STIR YOU UP TO JEALOUSY OF THEM WHOM AS YET YOU CALL “NO PEOPLE”; I WILL MAKE YOU FURIOUS AGAINST THE PRIVILEGES OF A NATION AS YET UNTUTORED.’—(*Deuteronomy* 32: 21). Nay, Isaiah throws off all reserve: he cries, ‘I HAVE BEEN FOUND BY THOSE WHO WERE NOT SEEKING ME, I HAVE REVEALED MYSELF TO THOSE WHO WERE NOT CONSCIOUSLY ENQUIRING FOR ME.’ Then he turns upon Israel, crying, ‘ALL THROUGH THE DAY HAVE I BEEN STRETCHING OUT MY HANDS TO A PEOPLE WHO DISOBEY AND CONTRADICT ME.’—(*Isaiah* 65: 1, 2).

XI

Has it come to this, then, that God has repudiated His own people? No! Oh no! Why, I am an Israelite myself. I am of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. No, God has *not* repudiated His own people, the people whom He marked out for His own so long ago. You surely must remember that scene in the life of Elijah, and the language of the record—how the prophet, pleading with God against Israel, cries, ‘LORD, THEY HAVE MASSACRED THY PROPHETS, THEY HAVE DUG UP THE VERY FOUNDATIONS OF THINE ALTARS; I AM THE SOLE SURVIVOR, AND THEY ARE NOW HUNTING FOR MY LIFE!’—(*First Kings* 19: 10, 14). Well, what says the Voice of God to him?—‘I HAVE RESERVED FOR MINE OWN SEVEN THOUSAND MEN SO LOYAL THAT THEY HAVE NEVER BOWED A KNEE TO BAAL.’—(*First Kings* 19: 18). In like manner, even in this our day, there has appeared a remnant—those who by God’s free grace are His chosen ones. But, inasmuch as it is by His free grace, His choice is not conditioned by works of theirs, the era for which is past:

were it otherwise, the term 'free grace' would be a mere misnomer. What follows? This, that what Israel has, through all his history, been seeking, he has not attained. God's chosen ones have attained it; but the rest have been callously indifferent. The words of Scripture are applicable to them—'GOD HATH CAST THEM INTO A TRANCE OF STUPOR, SO THAT THEIR EYES SEE NOT, THEIR EARS HEAR NOT'—(*Isaiah* 29:10)—and so it has continued to this day. David, with equal appropriateness, says, 'LET THEIR VERY TABLE BECOME TO THEM A TRAP, A SNARE, A PITFALL, A RETRIBUTION. LET THEIR EYES BE SHROUDED IN GLOOM, THAT THEY MAY NOT SEE: MAKE THOU THEIR BACK STOOP BENEATH THIS BURDEN FOR EVER!'—(*Psalms* 69: 22, 23). *For ever?*—Does their stumbling, then, involve an irretrievable fall? No! Oh no! Nay, but their lapse *has* left the field clear for the salvation of the Gentiles, and should have the effect of stirring up the Jews to emulous striving after a like blessing. Ah then, if that very lapse of theirs was so fraught with blessing to the world, if even their shortcoming gave such riches to the Gentiles, how much more blessing shall their full reinstatement bring!

I turn now to you, the Gentiles. In so far as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I insist upon the grandeur of my function—if only to stir up to emulation the Jews, my own flesh and blood, and so to rescue some at least of them. Think of the issue at stake—if their rejection has involved the reconciliation of the rest of humanity, what shall their re-acceptance involve?—surely a very Life from the Dead! And this is their inalienable heritage; for, observe—when the first-fruits (Abraham and the Patriarchs) become hallowed (as in the ceremony of the heave-offering), the whole mass of dough (their descendants), to which they belong, shares in the consecration. To change the figure: if the root (Abraham again) be holy, so are the branches (his children). And even supposing some of those branches have been snapped off from the parent-stock, and you, the Gentile, a slip of wild-olive, have been grafted into their place, and so have become a sharer in the root's sap and

in the fertility of the olive, beware of assuming airs of superiority over those branches. If you are inclined to look down on them, let this reflection sober you—it is not you that support the root: it is the root that supports you. ‘Ah but,’ you will be saying, ‘branches have been snapped off, that I—I—might be grafted in their place!’ Quite so—it was through unfaith that they were snapped off, and it is only by faith that you stand where you do. There is no ground for arrogance here, but rather for dread. Think—if God spared not those branches which had an inherited claim to their place, be sure that He will not spare you either. Fix your eyes on God’s goodness if you will; but fix them on His severity too. Those lapsed ones have experienced His severity: you are proving His goodness—*but* only so long as you comport yourself in strict accordance with that goodness; else, you also shall be hewn away. Yes, and those Jews too, if they do not remain obstinate in their unbelief, shall be grafted in again, since for God it is no impossibility to graft them in again. Why, if you have been hewn away from what is, in its very nature, a mere wild-olive, and have been, by a process which is the very opposite of the natural one, grafted on to a fruitful olive, is it not much more reasonable to expect that these, which have a natural affinity with it, shall be regrafted on to their parent-tree?

I think it is time, my brothers, that you should learn this Secret of the Initiated, (it may save you from over-estimating your own importance),—that the partial obduracy which has befallen Israel will last only until the full ingathering of the Gentiles has been secured, and then, under these conditions, will follow the salvation of *all* Israel. This is the import of that prophecy, ‘THERE SHALL COME OUT OF ZION THEIR DELIVERER: HE SHALL BANISH ALL GODLESSNESS FROM JACOB.’—(*Isaiah* 59: 20, 21). ‘AND THIS COVENANT THAT I HAVE GIVEN SHALL BE RENEWED TO THEM WHEN I HAVE TAKEN AWAY THEIR SINS.’—(*Isaiah* 27: 9). From the point of view of their non-acceptance of the Glad-tidings, they may be God’s foes—you are profiting

by that: but from the point of view of God's irrevocable choice, they are still, for their Fathers' sakes, God's dear ones. God, in fact, does not repent of bounty once bestowed, nor withdraw an invitation once given. You too were once disobedient to God; but now, through stepping into the place they vacated through disobedience, you have obtained mercy. Correspondingly, they are temporarily disobedient; but, as a result of the mercy shown to you, they too shall obtain mercy. God shut the door on them all when they passed into the prison-cell of disobedience, only with the intention of having mercy on all. O fathomless abyss of God's rich bounty, of His wisdom, of His knowledge! Who can explore His decisions, who track out His paths? 'WHO HATH DIVINED THE PURPOSE OF THE LORD? WHO WAS EVER COUNSELLOR TO HIM?'—(*Isaiah* 40: 13). 'WHO EVER FIRST GAVE AUGHT TO HIM, FOR WHICH HE MAY CLAIM RECOMPENSE?'—(*Job* 41: 11). From Him their Source flow all things; by Him are they upheld; to Him, their Consummation, all things tend. Glory to Him through the eternities! Amen.

XII

I appeal to you, then, by all these compassions of God, O my brothers—bring your lives, and set them by the altar, as a sacrifice, a living one, a hallowed one, acceptable to God. The necessity of this rite of consecration follows from all the argument. Do not conform to the externalities of this world; nay, let your characters be transformed by the birth of a new life-purpose, so that you may put God's design to the test of your own experience, and so prove how kind, how gladdening, how flawless it is.

Now I have a warning for you, prompted by the divine grace bestowed on me—and I address it to all who are among you:—do not be uplifted with unjustifiable notions of your importance. Let your thoughts tend to sober views, proportioned to the measure of faith which God has allotted to each man. Just as in our bodies we have many members, all of which have not the same function, so we, numerous as we are,

compose collectively one body in our union with the Messiah and as individual members are mutually dependent. Well, possessing as we do gifts which differ according to the special grace bestowed on each of us, let us use them accordingly. He whose gift is inspired eloquence must have regard to the symmetrical presentation of the Faith: he who has a gift for administration must give himself heart and soul to his administrative work: let him whose gift lies in exposition cultivate that gift: he whose gift is exhortation, should concentrate his powers on that: he who has wealth to distribute must do it with a single eye to God's service. If your department be the direction of others' labours, stimulate them by your own enthusiasm for the work. If you come with sympathy to sorrow, bring God's sunlight in your face. Let there be no pretence about your love. Loathe all wickedness: wed yourselves to goodness. In mutual love to the brethren be as members of one family. Give respectful precedence to one another. In earnest endeavour be no laggards: your spirit should be fairly seething with enthusiasm while you are toiling as the Lord's bondmen. Let your hope be something exultant: in affliction never flinch. In prayer be intensely in earnest. Share your wealth with necessitous believers. Be on the watch for opportunities of giving loving welcome to strangers. Shower blessings on those who persecute you: beware of imprecating judgments on them—bless them. Be sympathetic—be glad with those that are glad; mingle your tears with those who weep. Be all of one heart and soul: do not be exclusive, but walk hand in hand with the lowly. Do not over-estimate your own discernment. Requite to no man wrong for wrong. Be careful to conform to the proprieties, the decencies, of human society. So far as you can without sacrificing your principles, live in peace with all men. Never seek revenge for your own wrongs, dear friends: leave the field clear to God's wrath. It stands written, 'VENGEANCE IS MY PREROGATIVE, I WILL REQUITE, SAITH THE LORD.'—(*Deuteronomy* 32: 35). Nay, but 'IF THINE ENEMY BE HUNGRY, GIVE HIM FOOD: IF HE BE THIRSTY, GIVE HIM

DRINK. BY SO DOING THOU WILT PILE RED-HOT BRANDS UPON HIS HEAD.'—(*Proverbs* 25: 21, 22). Do not let yourself be conquered by evil: conquer evil by kindness.

XIII

Let every person render loyal submission to government authority. No authority exists save by God's sanction; such as do exist have been appointed by God. It follows that whoever rebels against authority is a rebel against God's arrangement, and rebels shall bring down on themselves the judgment of God. Magistrates are a terror not to good, but to bad actions. Do you wish to have no reason to dread authority? Act uprightly: you will then earn its approval. The magistrate should be, in your eyes, God's steward, appointed for the good of society. But if you act wrongfully, you may well fear: it is not for nothing that the magistrate is invested with the power of life and death. He is God's steward, the exponent of God's wrath, inflicting His vengeance on the evil-doer. Therefore, you are absolutely bound to loyal submission, not only through dread of that wrath, but also through the claims of conscience. On the same principle you also pay taxes; for the magistrates are administrators under God: it is to nothing less than His work that they devote their energies. Pay to all men their just dues—taxes to whom taxes are due, custom-duties to whom custom-duties are due, respect to whom respect is due, homage to whom homage is due.

Do not leave a debt to any man unpaid. There is, however, one perpetual debt, that of loving one another. He who loves his neighbour has thereby fulfilled all the requirements of the Law. For, take the prohibitions—'THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY—THOU SHALT NOT KILL—THOU SHALT NOT STEAL—THOU SHALT NOT COVET' (*Exodus* 20: 13-17), and so on—they are all summed up in this one injunction, 'THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF.'—(*Leviticus* 19: 18). Love can perpetrate no wrong against a neighbour: it follows that the complete fulfilment of the Law is found in love.

You will find a special motive for doing all this, if you recognise the imminence of a great crisis. Yes, it is high time for you to start up from slumber. Our Great Deliverance is nearer to-day than when we first believed.

Hymn of the New Day

The night is far spent:
The day is drawn near!

Let us disarray ourselves of the deeds of darkness;
And let us array ourselves in the armour of the
light.

As in the face of the day, decorously let us live—
Not in revellings and drunkenness,
Not in licentiousness and debauchery,
Not in wrangling and jealousy.

Nay, but clothe you with the nature of our Lord,
Of Jesus the Messiah.

Ah, let not the body, and the pampering of its cravings,
be your life's aim!

XIV

In the case of a man who overlays his faith with tender scrupulosities, welcome him as a brother into your church—not, however, into an atmosphere of disputatious casuistry. One man's faith makes no distinction between articles of food; another, in his sensitive scrupulosity, dares eat herbs alone. Let not the untrammelled eater treat with contempt the abstainer; and let not the abstainer sit in judgment on the non-abstainer. I tell you, God has taken the man into His service. Who then are you, that you should presume to sit in judgment on the household-servant of another? With his own master rests the decision whether he acts rightly or wrongly. 'He is right,' will be that decision; for the Lord's prerogative it is to pronounce him in the right. This man decides for the superior sacredness of one day as compared with another: that man holds that all are equally sacred. The real

essential is, that each must take his own line upon clear, full, personal conviction. He who attaches special significance to a certain day does so in the Lord's service. So also the non-abstainer eats in the Lord's service, since he thanks God for his food; while the abstainer abstains in the Lord's service; he too thanks God for what he *does* eat. The fact is, not one of us lives for himself, not one of us dies for himself. If we live, for the Lord we live; if we die, for the Lord we die. Whether, then, we live or die, we belong to the Lord. It was, indeed, with this object that Messiah died and came to life, that He might become Lord both of the dead and of the living. You then, the abstainer—how dare you presume to sit in judgment on your brother? Or *you*, again, the non-abstainer—how dare you presume to treat your brother with contempt? It is at God's bar that we shall all have to present ourselves. For it stands written, 'AS I LIVE, SAITH THE LORD, TO ME SHALL EVERY KNEE BEND, AND TO GOD SHALL EVERY TONGUE MAKE CONFESSION.'—(*Isaiah* 45: 23). It follows then, that it is to God alone that each one of us is to be answerable for his own actions.

Let us, then, continue no more to judge one another: nay, but let this be your judgment, that it is wrong to set in your brother's path anything at which he may stumble or be revolted. I know, nay, I am convinced, as one in union with Messiah, that nothing is, in itself, ceremonially unclean for us. Still, for the man who accounts this or that to be unclean, for him it is unclean. Only, if your brother is daily pained by what you eat, you have ceased to live by the law of love. Do not persist in ruining him for whom Messiah died, for the sake of an article of food. Let not your justifiable actions be such as to be open to misconstruction. The Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking: it is righteousness, heart-peace, and joy in the presence of the Holy Spirit. He who in this respect surrenders his own freedom to Messiah is acceptable in God's sight; in men's he is of tested worth. Well then, let us set two objects before us—the cause of peace, and, in our

mutual relations, the upbuilding of the fabric of the church. Do not, for the sake of an article of food, unbuild what is God's work. As I said, all things are for us ceremonially clean; but ill is it for that man, who by his eating puts a hindrance in another's path. Better than that would it be neither to eat meat, nor to drink wine, nor to take anything which may make your brother's feet stumble. As for the liberal faith which you have, keep it to yourself, displaying it only to God. Well for him who, in connection with what he finds so fit and proper, has no cause to pass judgment *on himself*! It is not a slight risk that you will thus avoid. If the man who has scruples eats through your example that which his conscience disallows, he stands condemned before God; for all action that has not its source in faith is sin.

XV

Yes, we of the robust faith have a duty—to take up the burden of the tender scruples of the weak ones, not to aim at consulting our own pleasure only. Let each of us try to make his neighbour happy, keeping in view his true interests, aiming still at building up the structure of his spiritual life. Well may we, for even Messiah never once consulted His own pleasure. Those words of Scripture apply to Him—‘THE RAILINGS OF THOSE WHO RAILED ON THEE WERE SHOWERED UPON ME.’—(*Psalm* 69: 9). Yes, all things thus recorded of old were recorded for our instruction, that we, through patient endurance, and through the consolation drawn from those Scriptures, might hold fast our hope. Now may that God who gives the power of patient endurance, who supplies consolation, grant to you to attain mutual unanimity on the lines marked out by Jesus the Messiah, that with united hearts and voices you may glorify God, the Father of our Lord Jesus the Messiah. Thus receive to your hearts one another, even as Messiah received you; and so shall you subserve the glory of God. For Messiah, I must remind you, came as the Servant of Man—first, of the circumcised Jews, to vindicate the truth

of God, by confirming the promises given to the Fathers of our race; secondly, of the Gentiles, to give them reason to glorify God for His uncovenanted mercy to them. This too was foretold in Scripture. Thus—‘FOR THIS CAUSE I WILL ACKNOWLEDGE THY MERCIES AMONG THE GENTILES, AND TO THY NAME WILL SING PRAISES.’—(*Psalm* 18: 49). Again,—‘EXULT, YE GENTILES, ALONG WITH HIS OWN PEOPLE.’—(*Deuteronomy* 32: 43). Again—‘PRAISE YE, ALL YE GENTILES, PRAISE THE LORD, AND LET ALL THE PEOPLES PRAISE HIM!’—(*Psalm* 117: 1). Once more, Isaiah says, ‘THERE SHALL BE THE ROOT OF JESSE, AND ONE WHO ARISETH TO RULE OVER THE GENTILES. ON HIM SHALL THE GENTILES REST THEIR HOPE.’—(*Isaiah* 11: 10). May the God who vouchsafes to you that same hope fill you with all joy and peace through the exercise of your faith, so that this hope of yours may be an overflowing fountain, by the power of His Holy Spirit.

I am satisfied, my brothers—I know it without having met you—that you are rich in goodness already, that you are filled with perfect spiritual illumination, that you are qualified even to admonish one another. Still, I have written to you quite unreservedly, partly because I wanted to recall to your memory the foregoing principles. I have done so by virtue of the grace bestowed on me from God’s hand—the grace which commissioned me to be the almoner of the gift of Messiah Jesus to the Gentiles. I may call myself the officiating priest of the Glad-tidings of God, my charge being to make the sacrificial offering of the Gentiles, consecrated by the Holy Spirit, acceptable to God. I have, then, legitimate cause to exult in the presence of Jesus the Messiah in the work done for God. Of course I shall not presume thus to speak of any work, except what has been actually done by myself as an instrument in the hands of Messiah. Of me has He made use to secure the submission of the Gentiles, has armed me with arguments, has strengthened me for action, has accompanied my work with the might of signs and marvels, in fact, with the might of the Holy Spirit. Hence, starting from Jerusalem, and making a

complete circuit of all countries as far as Illyricum, I have proclaimed in their entirety the Glad-tidings of the Messiah. My ambition has been all along to proclaim the Glad-tidings not in places where Messiah's name, Jesus, was already known—I am not the man to usurp for my building another workman's foundation—but to act on the principle embodied in these words of Scripture, 'THEY TO WHOM NO TIDINGS OF HIM WERE PROCLAIMED SHALL SEE HIM: THEY WHO HAVE NOT HEARD OF HIM SHALL UNDERSTAND.'—(*Isaiah* 52: 15).

All this press of work has again and again hindered me from coming to you. Now, however, I can find no fresh field of labour in this country, and I have been for many years most anxious to visit you. So, whenever I do start on my intended journey to Spain, I am hoping to see you as I pass through Rome. Then, I trust, you will speed me on my way thither, after I have first to some extent enjoyed your society. For the present, however, I must postpone the pleasure, as I have to travel to Jerusalem, to distribute relief to the members of the church there. This task falls on me, because the Macedonian and Achaian churches have cheerfully made among themselves a contribution for the poor members of the church at Jerusalem. Yes, they have done it with hearty good will; though, to be sure, it is no more than the discharge of a debt. For, if these Gentiles have obtained a share in the spiritual blessings of the Jews, the least they can do is to levy on themselves for the supply of the bodily necessities of the Jews. Well, as I was saying, after completing this task, and after seeing this harvest of our efforts safely delivered to them, I mean to pass through you on my journey to Spain. Sure am I, that, when I do come to you, my coming will be crowned with the abundant blessing of Messiah.

I entreat you, my brothers, by the dear name of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah, by all the love inbreathed by the Spirit, to unite with me in strong wrestling of prayer to God on my behalf. Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judæa. Pray that my ministrations of relief to Jerusalem may

be graciously accepted by the members of that Church. If all goes well, I shall (if it be the will of God) most gladly come to you, and snatch an interval of rest in your society. May God, the Giver of Peace, be with you all! Amen.

XVI

I have to bespeak your welcome for the bearer of this, Phœbe, a member of our society here. She is an active worker in the church at Kenchreæ. I trust that you will, for the love of our Lord, give her such a welcome as is worthy of believers, and will assist her in any business in which she may require your help. Many there are whom *she* has shielded from suffering, myself among the number.

Convey my greetings to Prisca and Aquila, my fellow-toilers in the cause of Messiah Jesus. To shield my life, they once laid their own necks beneath the axe. Not only I, but also all the Gentile churches, are grateful to them. Greet also the congregation that meets in their house. Greet on my behalf my dear friend Epænetus: he was the first sheaf of the harvest reaped from Asia for Messiah. Greet Mary from me: she has worked hard for you. Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow-countrymen—once my fellow-prisoners too: distinguished are they among our missionaries: ay, and they found life in Messiah before me. Greet Ampliatus: dear is he to me through our life in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, my fellow-toiler in Messiah's cause; Stachys too, my dear, dear friend. Greet Apelles, tested and tried as he is in Messiah's work. Greet from me the believers of Aristobulus' household. Greet Herodion, my fellow-countryman. Greet those of Narcissus' household who have life in our Lord. Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa—they are ever toiling in our Lord's cause. Greet Persis—dear woman! she has worked hard in our Lord's service. Greet Rufus the Lord's chosen one, and his mother—a mother has she been to me too. My greetings to Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the rest of their circle—our brothers all. Greetings to Philologus and Julia,

to Nereus and his sister, to Olympas, and to all their circle—God's hallowed ones are they. Greet each other with the kiss of consecration. The churches send their greetings to you, all the churches of Messiah.

Now I beg of you, my brothers, to be on your guard against the men who are exciting those notorious dissensions, and putting those obstructions in the path of believers, all contrary to the teaching which you received. Shun them. Such men are no bondmen of our Lord Messiah: they are slaves to their own base appetites; and by their sanctimonious cant they delude the hearts of guileless people. They have probably marked you for their prey, for the news of your submission to Jesus has reached all the churches. While, therefore, I rejoice over you, I do want you to be wise for all good ends, but too innocent to be used as tools for evil ends. The God who gives peace shall bruise this Satan under your feet ere long.

May the grace of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah, be ever with you!

Timotheus, my fellow-labourer, sends greeting to you, as do Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, all fellow-countrymen of mine.

I, Tertius, who write this letter for the love of our Lord, greet you. Gaius, at whose house I am staying, who also shows hospitality to all members of our church, greets you. Erastus, the city-treasurer, and Quartus our brother, both send greeting.

To Him who alone has power to make you stand strong in that faith which is the essence of the Glad-tidings that I have published, of the proclamation of Jesus the Messiah, which is one with the revelation of that mystic secret which through immemorial ages has remained unuttered, and has been unveiled now, and, supported by the testimony of prophetic writings, has, by the appointment of the Eternal God, been made known to all the Gentiles, that they may believe and obey—to Him, God the only wise, be offered, through Jesus the Messiah, glory for evermore. Amen.

THE LETTERS WRITTEN DURING THE FIRST IMPRISONMENT

THE narrative of the Acts breaks off at the commencement of St. Paul's imprisonment. We are told that the apostle lived for two years in his own hired apartment (not 'house'), a floor, or portion of a floor, in one of those huge lodging-houses which have been always a feature of Rome. One room was probably all he could afford (living as he did on the charity of the Philippian Church): here he lived, pending his trial: his friends might visit him (there was nearly always one at least staying with him): those who wished to hear him talk and preach might assemble there: but he could not himself go abroad. He was chained to some soldier of the Guard all the time; and so, though he was not yet in a common dungeon, this room, whose bare walls bounded his horizon night and day, was for him a prison.

THE LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

[WRITTEN DURING THE FIRST IMPRISONMENT,
ABOUT 62 A.D.]

The Persons addressed. It was at Philippi that the first Christian church was founded in Europe by St. Paul. Here the cry, 'Come over into Macedonia and help us!' received from him its first practical answer. Here he enjoyed the loving hospitality of Lydia: here he endured the outrage for which the magistrates had to apologise: here the prison became a temple of God and Christ. It was to the Philippians that, of all his converts, Paul looked back with most loving affection, with most unwavering confidence: from them alone would he consent to accept anything to relieve his personal necessities. When, by his imprisonment at Rome, he was prevented from visiting the churches, it was¹ to write to the Philippians that he first took up that pen which he had by this time proved to be a mightier weapon for the Master's service than even his tongue had been.

Why it was written. A member of the Philippian church, named Epaphroditus, came to Rome bearing a pecuniary contribution (the fourth) from that church, for the apostle's needs. While there, his visitor was attacked by an illness which brought him to death's door. News of this caused great distress among his friends in Macedonia. On his recovery, weak and shattered as he was, he longed for home; and Paul sent by him this letter, which is distinguished from all the rest by the fact that he has to blame his converts for no errors of doctrine, to censure them for no irregularities of life.

¹ The order of the Epistles of the First Imprisonment is matter of dispute; but the above is the opinion of Lightfoot and many other scholars.

Its leading exhortation is 'Rejoice!—in spite of all you have to bear.' It was a strong, manly church, and its one peril was over-independence. The prowling mongrels of the Judaising party, who had made havoc of the Galatian church, against whom he had warned and armed the Roman church, had not ventured to invade loyal Macedonia yet; but, as he believed that they were skulking near the fold, he says (3:2), 'Take heed of those *dogs!*'—implying that, while they would fain discourage believers by telling them that they were unclean in God's sight, unless they submitted to circumcision, it was *they* who were really unclean before Him.

THE LETTER

I

Paul and Timotheus, bondservants of Messiah Jesus, to all believers whose life is in Jesus, who dwell at Philippi, along with their church-overseers and church-stewards—

Grace be to you, and heart-peace, from God our Father, and from our Lord, Jesus the Messiah.

I do thank my God for all my memories of you. Always, in all my prayers for you—for all of you—it is from a glad heart that I put up each prayer. I thank Him for your helpfulness in speeding the Glad-tidings, from the first day you heard it until now. Of this thing, if of nothing else, am I confident, that He who has begun His work, His good work, in your hearts, will go on perfecting it, right up to the Day of the Coming of Messiah Jesus. Indeed, I have a right to entertain this confidence with respect to you all, because I bear you ever in my heart. Both in my imprisonment, and in my vindication of the Glad-tidings and establishment of its truth, I have felt that you have all had your share in the grace bestowed on me. God is my witness how I yearn for you, for all of you, with a heart which is one with the heart of Messiah

Jesus! And this is my prayer, that your love may rise higher and higher to its fullest development in recognition of the truth, and in a comprehensive grasp of its application, thus furnishing you with a sure test of what is true excellence, so that you may remain untainted by error, unstumbling amidst obstacles, till the Day of Messiah's Appearing, bearing the while a full harvest of righteousness, attained through Jesus our Messiah, and redounding to the glory and praise of God.

Now, my brothers, I want you to be under no misapprehension—the truth is, that what has here befallen me has, so far from justifying your fears, resulted in giving a fresh impetus to the Glad-tidings. So much is this the case, that my imprisonment has become the general topic of talk (as being in Messiah's cause¹) through all the vast barracks of the Household Troops, and, indeed, among the population of Rome generally. Nay, more, most of the brethren, having, through my imprisonment, learned to put their trust in the Lord, are growing bolder than ever to speak the Word fearlessly. Some persons there are, it is true, who are heralding Messiah's Coming out of mere jealousy and factiousness, but others do so in a loyal spirit.

Those who are animated by love do it because they know that I am the appointed champion of the Glad-tidings. Those animated by party-spirit are announcing Messiah's Coming

¹ This would seem to have constituted its main interest for the troops and population of Rome. The expectation among the Jews of the appearance of a Conquering Messiah, and their fierce readiness to rise in revolt against Rome at the summons of any false Messiah, had long made the name 'Messiah' as ominous to Roman, as 'Mahdi' has been to English ears. When, therefore, it became known that the central fact of Paul's preaching was that the Messiah had already appeared, that his kingdom was not of this world, and so did not involve insurrection against Rome, when, moreover, it was known that this new faith had actually been adopted by thousands of Jews, both in Palestine and throughout the empire, we may well imagine that the apostle's presence would create something like a sensation, and that the general feeling at Rome would be in his favour. Both government and people would be inclined to regard such propaganda as worthy of encouragement; and this may in some measure account for the bolder attitude of his brother Christians.

from no pure motives, but thinking to aggravate my imprisonment by persecution. What then?—after all, one way or the other, whether insincerely or sincerely, Messiah is still proclaimed; and in this fact I rejoice—ay, and shall yet rejoice. For sure am I that for me the outcome of all this will be salvation, through your intercession with God, and through the strength supplied to me by the Spirit of Jesus the Messiah. This accords with my own eager expectation and hope, that I shall in no respect be disappointed, but that, as at all other times, so now, by my fearless outspokenness Messiah shall be exalted in this body of mine—be it by my life, or by my death. For (if I could think of myself alone) for me life is absorption in Messiah: death—ah, that is gain! Yet—yet—if to live on in this body be yet reserved for me, this will mean seeing more fruit still of my toil. Life?—death?—which to choose I cannot discern. Oh, I am in a strait betwixt the two, for the yearning that I feel to sail away from earth, and to haven me with Messiah. Better, ay, far better, were this! Yet, for me to tarry on in this body is, for your sake, the more pressing need. And so, since I am sure of this, something tells me that I shall still abide in life, shall tarry on, a companion to all of you to further your spiritual progress, to enhance your joy in believing. So will you have abundant ground for exultation in Messiah Jesus on my account, when I visit you again.

One caution only—let your life as members of one Commonwealth be worthy of the Glad-tidings of the Messiah, so that, whether I do come and see you, or whether I must still be afar, and only hear news of you, I may know that you are standing firm, animated by one spirit, may know that with united soul you are working strenuously shoulder to shoulder for the faith of the Glad-tidings, may know that you are not cowed one whit by your adversaries. Their failure to daunt you is clear evidence—an actual sign from God—for them, that their destruction is imminent, but for you, that salvation is yours. For to you, to you has the privilege been freely given, in Messiah's cause—not only to believe on Him, but also in His cause to

bear suffering. So will you be maintaining the same struggle whereof you once saw my championship, whereof you now hear of my championship.

II

I appeal to you then, by all the encouragement you find in Messiah's nearness, by all love's comforting power, by all your common share in God's Spirit—in the name of all heart-yearnings I beseech you, of all pitying sympathy—fill up the measure of my joy, by being one in purpose, cherishing the same love; one in soul, animated by the same aspirations. Let there be no thought of factiousness, none of empty arrogance; but, in the true spirit of humility, still regard your fellows as superior to yourselves. Do not have an eye each to his own interests, but each to the interests of his neighbours. Let the same purpose inspire you as was in Messiah Jesus—

Hymn of the Incarnation

He, even when he subsisted in the form of God,
Did not selfishly cling to His prerogative of equality with
God:

Nay, tenantless of all that glory,
He assumed the form of a bonds slave,
And appeared in the likeness of man.

So was He found on earth as a man in outward
seeming,
And abased Himself in rendering submission, even to
the death—

A death upon the Cross!

Because He stooped so low, God uplifted Him very
high,

And hath freely given Him The Name—

The Name that is above every name, decreeing

'In the name of Jesus shall every knee bend in prayer,

Alike of dwellers in heaven, on earth, in the underworld,

And every tongue shall utter this confession,

“Jesus the Messiah is Lord!”
So rendering glory to God the Father.’

Therefore, my dear ones, in accordance with the obedience you have always rendered, do you—not merely with such enthusiasm as you would display if I were among you, but, since I am far away, with much more—work out, with fear and self-distrust, ay, with trembling self-distrust, your own salvation. You have not to do it in your unaided strength: it is God who is all the while supplying the impulse, giving you the power to resolve, the strength to perform, the execution of His good-pleasure. Do it all without mutual fault-findings, without disputings, that you may show yourselves blameless, uncontaminated, irreproachable children of God, in the midst of a society morally warped, spiritually perverted, amongst whom you shine out clearly, like stars in the world’s sky, holding out to it the light of the Word of Life. So shall I exult in anticipation of the Day of Messiah’s Coming, in the thought that I have not run my race for a phantom prize, nor toiled for an elusive wage. Yea, and if I am not suffered to see that day—yea, though my life be now at point to be shed as wine over the burnt sacrifice and priestly service of your faith, still I rejoice, still I share the joy of all of you. Do you, too, no less rejoice, and share my joy.

Still, I do hope—I rest that hope on our Lord Jesus—to send Timotheus very soon to you. I too want to be cheered by getting news of you. I send him, for I have no one else who is heart and soul with me, no one who is sure to devote himself unselfishly to your interests. All the others are trying to advance their own interests, not the cause of Jesus the Messiah. But you know his sterling worth: you know that, as the service of a son to a father, so has his service been in helping me to spread the Glad-tidings. Him, then, I am hoping to send forthwith, as soon as I can conjecture what will be my fate. Yet I am confident, trusting as I do in the Lord, that I myself also shall soon come to you. I have thought it necessary also

to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, my fellow-worker, my fellow-soldier, who came as your envoy and supplied my necessities. He has been home-sick for all of you, and very depressed, because you had heard of his illness. It was quite true: he was brought by illness to death's door. But God had compassion on him, and not on him alone, but also on me, that I might not have sorrow heaped on sorrow. So I have been all the more eager to send him, that you may once more be gladdened by the sight of him, and that the burden of my own sorrow may be lightened. Welcome him home, then, for the love of our Lord, with all joy. Hold men like him in honour, because it was through labouring for Messiah that he was brought to death's door. Yes, he set his own life at stake in his single-handed efforts to supply all deficiencies in service to me which you were not here to render.

III

For the rest, my brothers, rejoice still in the Lord. To keep on reminding you that you have a right to do so is not irksome to me: it may help to save you from being discouraged. And so, be on the watch against those *unclean beasts*!—against those *mischief-workers*!—against the *mutilators*! It is we who are the true Circumcised People, we who worship by the promptings of God's Spirit, who make our boast in Messiah Jesus alone, and who put no trust in a sign scored on the flesh. Though, for that matter, I am just the man who (were it of any use) might well put trust even in such bodily externalities. If any man can claim a right to put trust in such things, I can, and pre-eminently so. I was circumcised when but eight days old: I am of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin—a Hebrew of purest descent. As to strict observance of the Mosaic Law—I was actually a Pharisee: as to fanatical zeal for that Law—it is enough to say that I used to persecute the Church. As to righteousness (so far as that can be attained by observance of the Law) I succeeded in becoming irreproachable. But all that, which once was, in my eyes, so much profit, I have come

to consider, for Messiah's sake, as utter loss. Nay, I go further, I estimate *all* things as mere loss, in comparison with the transcendent preciousness of the knowledge of Messiah, of Jesus my Lord. For His sake have I let all that wealth of mine be confiscated: I count it but as refuse, so I may but gain Messiah, may be found in union with Him, possessing no self-won righteousness—such as is supposed to come through observance of the Mosaic Law—but that alone which is won through faith in Messiah, the righteousness whose source is God, whose foundation is faith; and that I may know Him, may know the power outflowing from His resurrection, may know what it is to share His sufferings, that I may be moulded into likeness unto Him in the manner of His death, if so—ah, if haply so!—I may attain to that resurrection from the dead! Not that I have already grasped the prize, not that I am already perfected—no! but I am racing onward still, in the hope that I may close my hand upon that, for the winning of which Messiah's hand drew me forward, and set me in the race-course. No, my brothers, I deem not, I, that I have grasped it yet; but one thing I *can* say—this, that I forget all the course left behind, that I strain on, on, over that which stretches before me: with the goal in view am I racing on, onward to the prize to which God is calling us upward, the life in Messiah Jesus.

Let us, then, who are full-grown believers, hold these convictions. If you are, in any non-essentials, inclined to diverse views, here too will God make all clear to you. Only, let there be no vacillation: whatever progress we have made, in the same path let us press onward. Join the company of those who follow my example, my brothers. You have me for your model: note those who tread the same path as I do. I say this, because there are many who pursue a course which—I have often warned you against them; I weep as I repeat the warning now—stamps them as enemies of Messiah's cross. Destruction is their goal; their god is their belly: their pride is in their shame; their thoughts grovel on the earth. We are not as they, for

Hymn of the Citizens of Heaven

The state whereof we are citizens has its being in the Heavens,
Whence also we watch to see our Deliverer appear,

Jesus, our Lord, the Messiah.

He shall transform this body,

The symbol of our present lowly state,

Into the likeness of that body

Which is the symbol of His glorious state.

This shall He do by virtue of the power

Whereby He is able also to subject all things to Him.

IV

Since this is so, my brothers, my dear ones, you whom I yearn to see, my joy, my wreath of victory!—in this spirit stand firm in union with our Lord, O dear ones mine!

Euodia, I beseech you, Syntyche, I beseech you, work harmoniously in our Lord's service. Yes, and I beg you also, my loyal yoke-fellow,¹ do you help them to do so. They have striven hard to help me in spreading the Glad-tidings—they, and Clemens, and the rest of my fellow-toilers. Well, all their names are set down in God's Book of Life.

Rejoice in the sense of the Lord's presence always. I will say it again—rejoice! Let unselfishness be known, as your distinguishing character, to all men.

The Lord's Coming is now at hand!

Let no anxieties fret you: nay, in every matter let the things you would ask be made known by means of prayer—by definite requests—linked with thanksgiving, at God's throne. And so the peace that God gives, the peace that transcends all conception, shall be the fortress-warrior of your hearts, of all your thoughts, in this your life in Messiah Jesus.

Finally, brothers, what things soever are true, what things soever claim respect, are just, are pure, are winsome, are in

¹ The Elder, to whose hands this letter was to be delivered, and who would read it to the assembled church.

fair repute—all that is virtuous, all that wins praise—be these alone the things whereof you take account. Yes, these—which you learnt, which you accepted, whereof you heard, which you saw acted out in my life—continue to put these into practice. And God, He who gives peace, shall be with you.

I rejoiced greatly (it made me feel the nearness of our Lord) to find that you have at last, like a garden of the Lord, bloomed anew in loving thought for me. You cared for me all along, I know; but you had till now no opportunity of practically showing it. Do not think that I speak thus as having felt the pinch of want. No, I have learned, in whatever condition I am, to be independent of circumstances. I am schooled to bear the depths of poverty, I am schooled to bear abundance. In life as a whole, and in all its circumstances, I have mastered the secret of living—how to be the same amidst repletion and starvation, amidst abundance and privation. I am equal to every lot, through the help of Him who gives me inward strength. But, for all that, nobly have you done in taking your share of the burden of my affliction. I need not remind you, my Philippian friends, that, in the early days of my mission-work, when I first passed on from Macedonia, not a single church bore its share in balancing the account with me of giving and receiving,¹ except you—you alone. So far back as when I was in Thessalonica, you sent contributions once and again to meet my necessities. Never think that it is the *gift* that I crave: what I do crave is the harvest of blessing which is accumulating to your account. Now I have all I need: I have more than enough. My measure is full, now that I have received at Epaphroditus' hands what you have sent. It is no mere gift to me: it is sweet-smelling incense, it is an acceptable sacrifice, the smoke of which rises up well-pleasing to God. And God, my God, shall fill up the measure of all *your* need, with an abundance limited only by His own riches, shall supply it by His glorious presence in the person of Messiah Jesus.

¹ Of giving earthly goods in return for receiving spiritual blessings, as explained by St. Chrysostom.

Now to God, our Father, be the glory through the ages of ages. Amen.

Greet each believer who is in union with Messiah Jesus.

The brothers who are with me send you their salutation.

All members of the Church here greet you, especially those who belong to the Emperor's household.

The grace of the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, be with your spirit. Amen.

THE LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS

[WRITTEN DURING THE FIRST IMPRISONMENT,
ABOUT 62 A.D.]

The Persons addressed. Colossae (or Colassae), a town on the borders of Phrygia, near Laodicea, does not seem to have been ever visited by St. Paul. The church was apparently founded by Epaphras, a native, who visited Ephesus during the apostle's period of activity there.

Why it was written. During Paul's imprisonment, Epaphras visited Rome, and from him the apostle heard of the intrusion of a new form of error into the church. It seems to have been the first presentment of what was in after generations developed into Gnosticism. Half Jewish and half oriental, its mystical character had a certain charm for these inhabitants of a country which had ever been the chosen home of mystic and magical cults. The new heresy affected both the faith and the practice of the church. It taught that God was inaccessible, only to be approached through a long gradation of celestial intermediaries (of whom Jesus was but one), emanations from His Essence, and all combining to compose His Divine 'Plenitude.' Hence these celestial hierarchies must be adored; and, as matter was polluting, and the body a degradation, self-abasement and rigid asceticism must be practised as a necessary preliminary to invoking the intercession of such pure beings. Various features of the ritual and restrictions of Judaism were introduced to equip these fancies with a working system of outward observances. The obligations of life's duties and of social relations were thrust into the background.

As two friends, Tychicus of Ephesus and Onesimus of Colossae, were leaving Rome for the East, Paul entrusted to

them a letter for this church, the main object of which is to establish the principle that in Messiah Jesus alone dwells the Plenitude of the Godhead, that He is the only Mediator, the only Saviour, the Head of the Church, the Source of its life; that whatever celestial beings exist are subjected to Him. Hence practices—whether of ritual, of self-abasement, or of asceticism—founded on false beliefs are to be scouted. Instead of these there must be love and mutual helpfulness, and the fulfilment of the duties of daily life.

THE LETTER

I

Paul—appointed through God's will an apostle of Messiah Jesus—and Timotheus the brother,

to God's consecrated ones in Colossae, to the brothers who are still true to their union with Messiah:

Grace be to you, and heart-peace, from God our Father.

I give thanks always to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, in all my prayers for you. I have done so ever since I heard of your faith in Messiah Jesus, and of the love which you bear to all His consecrated ones, a love evoked by the hope which is your treasure stored up in the heavens. That hope you heard of long ago in the proclamation of the truth embodied in the Glad-tidings. This has reached you, and abides with you, as it does in all the world beside. Tree-like, it has been bearing fruit and growing higher everywhere, no less than among you, ever since the day when you first heard it, and recognised in its true aspect the gracious gift of God, as, in fact, you heard it from the lips of Epaphras, my dear fellow-bondman. He is, as my representative, a faithful steward of the gifts of Messiah. He it was also who told me of the love kindled in you by the Holy Spirit.

For this reason I too, ever since the day I heard of you, have not ceased to pray for you. I ask God that you may have in full measure that perfect knowledge of His will which is an essential of all true wisdom, of all spiritual intelligence. I ask Him that you may pass through life in a manner worthy of our Lord, so as to please Him entirely. I ask that in every good work you may, as trees of His planting, still be bearing fruit, still growing higher, in the perfect knowledge of God. I ask Him that with all His strength you may be strengthened, even to the measure of the might of His divine majesty, till you attain to all-enduring patience and forbearance, which exults under suffering. I ask that you may ever render thanksgiving to the Father who has made us fit to have a share in the inheritance of His consecrated ones who walk in light; for

Hymn of Messiah Supreme

He hath rescued us from the tyranny of darkness,
And hath transferred us into the Kingdom of the Son of
His love,

In whom we have our ransoming,
The remission of our sins.

And He is the image of God, the Unseen God.
First-born before all created things is He.
For in Him were all things created—
Things in the heavens and on the earth;
The things visible, the things invisible,

—Be they Thrones, be they Lordships, be they Dominations,
be they Powers—

Yea, all things through Him and for Him were created;
And before all is He, the *I AM*:
And in Him are all things knit into one whole;
And He is the Head of the Body, the Church—

He who is the Beginning, the First-born from the Dead;
Who is so, that in all things He may take the chiefest place.

For in Him was it God's pleasure that all His Plenitude
should dwell;

And through Him was God pleased to reconcile to
Himself the universe—
Yea, through Him—the universe of earth, the universe
of Heaven—
When He sealed their peace by the blood shed on
Jesus' Cross.

And you, who once were alienated from Him—you, who once, alike in the bent of your mind, and in evil practices, were God's foes—ay, you has God now reconciled to Himself in the human body of Jesus, by means of His death, so that now He may set you in God's presence, holy, flawless, and irreproachable. This He will do, if you do but abide in the Faith, firm-founded and solid-built, never staggered from that hope born of the Glad-tidings which you heard and which has been heralded forth in the hearing of every created being under heaven, the Glad-tidings of which I was made God's steward—I, Paul!

Even now, in sufferings endured in your cause I am rejoicing. I feel I am brimming up the measure, unfilled hitherto, of Messiah's sufferings in my own flesh, on behalf of His Body, which is the church. Of God's bounty to that church was I made a steward, for the dispensing of His gifts. This stewardship was committed to me for your benefit, that I might give the fullest publicity to the Message of God—that mystic secret of the Lord which, through long ages past, through generations gone, was unrevealed, but has now been made clear and plain to God's consecrated ones. Yes, to them was it God's will to make known what is the wealth of the glory of this mystic secret proclaimed among the Gentiles. That secret's essence is that 'Messiah is living within you,' which means for you the hope of the glorious vision of God. His Coming I now proclaim. I admonish every sinner, I instruct every hearer, with all the wisdom given me, so that I may set in God's presence every man, full-grown in the new life in Messiah. Ay, and for this am I toiling, I am wrestling

hard, with all the soul-thrilling power with which God in His might is enkindling me.

II

Do not think that I exaggerate: no, I wish you could realise in how stern a conflict I am now engaged in your cause, and in that of all the believers of Laodicea—in a word, of all who have not looked upon my living face. I yearn that their hearts may be comforted. I want them to be all knit together in mutual love, that love which is the key to all the treasure of the perfect satisfying of our intellect, to the comprehension of God's mystic secret—which is Messiah; for in Him is all the hid treasure of divine wisdom and spiritual illumination. I say this expressly that no one may victimise you by plausible arguments. I cannot, indeed, be with you in bodily presence: none the less in spirit I am ever with you. I rejoice over you: I mark how you stand shoulder to shoulder: I note the firm attitude of your faith, the faith that looks to Messiah.

In the same spirit, then, in which you accepted the Messiah, Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in union with Him. Be like trees fast-rooted, like buildings steadily rising, feeling His presence about you, and ever (for to this your education has led up) unshaken in your faith, and overflowing with thanksgiving.

See to it that there be no one who succeeds in entrapping you by the lure of 'philosophy'—empty delusion, rather!—moulded on human tradition, moulded on the puerilities of externalism, and not moulded on the example of Messiah. For it is in Him that all the 'Plenitude of the Godhead' has its corporeal home. Nay more, by union with Him you too are filled with that Plenitude. No celestial intermediary can come between you, for He is the Head over every angelic Principality and Power. In His person, too, you have already received circumcision—a circumcision this not performed by human hands. No, it consists in the stripping off of our sensual nature, which was done for us in the spiritual circumcision we received from Messiah. In the rite of baptism we were laid

with Him in His grave; in that rite too did we share His resurrection, through our faith in the soul-awakening power of God, who began by raising Jesus from the dead. And you too—for dead you lay in the charnel-house of your transgressions and the impurity of your sensual nature—you God thrilled with that same new life of Jesus. He freely forgave us all our transgressions: He cancelled the hand-graven Law that barred our access to Him, that confronted us with its decrees. He took it out of our path, and nailed it to the cross of Jesus. He stripped away from Himself all trammels of 'Principalities and Powers': He paraded them unsparingly, as He hailed them in the Triumph of the Cross.

Let no one, then, constitute himself a judge over you with respect to what you may eat or drink, or with regard to the observance of a festival, or a new moon, or of a Sabbath day. These things are but a shadow cast before by the realities that were to come; their substance is found in Messiah. Let no one cheat you of your heavenly prize through *his* fancy for self-abasement and adoration of angels. Such an innovator dwells amid visions of his own: he is inflated (quite groundlessly) by an intellect which can grasp the material only. He does not grasp the principle of the one Head, from whom the whole body, furnished with nourishment, and knit together by its joints and ligatures, is ever growing with the growth that God fosters. If, by your share in Messiah's death, you are severed from the rudimentary teachings of externalism, why, as though you still lived in an atmosphere of externalism, are you prepared to submit to ordinances, such as say, 'Handle not this!—taste not that!—touch not yonder thing!' (whereas the things thus prohibited were specially created for consumption in man's use)—ordinances whose sole sanction is found in the commandments and precepts of mere men? These restrictions do indeed involve an assumption of religious enlightenment, with their self-imposed ceremonialism, their self-abasement and asceticism; but they have no real value even as checks to sensual self-indulgence.

III

If, then, you have shared in Messiah's resurrection, aspire ever to the things on high, where Messiah is, throned at the right hand of God. Let your thoughts dwell on things above, not grovel on the earth. You have died to things of earth, and your real life now has been hidden, by its union with Messiah, in the being of God. When Messiah shall return in splendour, Messiah our Life, then you also shall with Him shine in the splendour of His glory.

Crush, then, the life out of those animal impulses which crawl on the earth, impulses to fornication, to impurity, to lustfulness, to wicked longings, and to covetousness—which is practically idolatry. It is on account of such sins that God's wrath is ever descending on the sons of disobedience. Ay, and in their company you too once walked, when you lived in the commission of these sins. Now, however, do you, like your fellow-believers, put them all from you. Put away anger, passion, malice: banish from your lips slander and foul language. Do not lie to each other, remembering that you have stripped yourselves of the outworn human nature, with all its habits, and have clothed yourselves with the new, which is ever rising through higher developments into perfect knowledge, is being moulded into the likeness of Him who created it. In this new life vanish all distinctions between Greek and Jew, the circumcised state and the uncircumcised, alien, savage, bondman, freeman. Messiah unites in Himself all, and in all He dwells.

Array yourselves, then, as God's chosen ones, His consecrated and dearly loved ones, in a heart of sympathy, in kindness, in lowliness, in gentleness, in tireless patience. Be forbearing to each other, forgiving these your other selves, if it so hap that any one has a grievance against any one. Even as the Lord forgave you, so do you forgive too. And, over all these, with love enfold yourselves—love, the all-clasping bond, the mark of perfectness. May the Peace of Messiah be throned in your hearts as the arbitrator in all disputes, the

Peace to which, as comprising one body, you were summoned; and be ye all thankfulness. May the word Messiah speaks to you have in your hearts, in all its wealth, its home. With all discretion teach and admonish one another. With psalms, with hymns, with chants inspired by the Spirit, be your hearts singing ever in thankfulness to God. And *everything*—whatever you do, in word or in act—do everything in the name of our Lord Jesus, while still through Him you offer your thanksgiving to God the Father.

Wives, be submissive to your husbands: by your life in the Lord this has become your duty. Husbands, be loving to your wives: do not say stinging things to them. Children, show obedience to your parents in every way; for this is acceptable in our Lord's presence. Fathers, do not chafe your children by continual fault-finding, so that they may not be discouraged.

Bondmen, show obedience in all ways to your earthly masters. Do it not merely when their eyes are on you, as those who court men's approval: render single-hearted obedience, because you fear the Lord. Whatever you do, perform it from the soul, as work done for the Lord, and not for men, since you know that from the Lord's hand you shall receive your recompense, the inheritance of His children. To the Lord Messiah are you bondmen. Do not you resent injustice; for he who wrongs his fellow-man shall surely receive requital proportioned to the wrong he has done, and at God's bar there is no respect for social distinctions.

IV

Masters, concede justice and fair treatment to your bondmen, bearing in mind that you too have a Master, in Heaven.

Let your prayers be characterised by intense earnestness—no drowsy listlessness—with thanksgiving. Keep on praying at the same time for me too, asking that God may throw wide the door for my mission to enter in, so that I may utter the *Mystic Secret of Messiah*,—for which, too, I now lie in prison—so that I may declare it plainly, as I am bound to utter it.

Conduct yourselves with discretion in your relations with Gentiles not of the church: seize every opportunity, like merchants who buy up a scarce commodity. Let your talk be always clothed with grace,—no vapid commonplace,—that you may never be at a loss for the fitting answer to each questioner.

All news of me will be given you by Tychicus, my most dear brother, my loyal helper, my fellow-bondman in our Lord's service. It is with this very object that I have sent him to you, that you may learn my condition, and that he may cheer your hearts. I send him in company with Onesimus, my loyal and dearly-loved brother, a fellow-townsmen, too, of yours. They will tell you of all that has happened here in Rome.

Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner, greets you; as does Marcus, Barnabas' cousin, (you have received instructions respecting him: if he comes to you, welcome him); and so does Joshua, surnamed Justus. They are circumcised converts, and are the only ones of that class who are my fellow-toilers for the extension of the Kingdom of God: they have proved a comfort to me. Epaphras, your own townsman, greets you. He is a bondman of Messiah Jesus, and is always wrestling for you in his prayers, asking that you may stand firm, mature in spiritual growth, and clear in your convictions respecting God's will. I can bear testimony that he is all earnestness for you, for our friends in Laodicea, and for those in Hierapolis. Luke, my dear friend the physician, greets you, as does Demas. Greet from me our brothers in Laodicea, also Nympha, and the believers who gather at her house.

When this letter has been read before you, make arrangements for its being read also before the church of the Laodiceans, also for your reading that which will be forwarded from Laodicea.¹

Give this message to Archippus, 'See to it that you fully discharge the stewardship that you have received in the Lord's service.'

This concluding salutation is in my own handwriting. Do not forget me in my prison. God's grace be with you. Paul.

¹ Probably it is the Epistle to the Ephesians that is referred to.

THE LETTER TO PHILEMON

[WRITTEN DURING THE FIRST IMPRISONMENT, ABOUT 62 A.D.]

WITH the letter to the Colossian church was sent another, a private letter to a member of that church. Years before, Philemon, a gentleman of Colossae, a dear friend of Paul, had a slave, worthless as the Phrygian slaves proverbially were—though, by a curious irony, he bore the name Onesimus, which means ‘serviceable.’ He had, it would seem, robbed his master, and then run away. He found his way at last to Rome, and there, under the influence of the apostle’s teaching, became a Christian. Repentant, and ready to make all amends in his power, he undertook to return to his old master. But his gratitude, his loving service, had made him very dear to Paul; and the apostle, remembering that his master could not be aware how changed a character returned to him, and knowing that by law he could inflict on him the extremest punishment (death by crucifixion was no unusual penalty for a heathen master to inflict for such offences), and desiring, moreover, for one who had grown to be like a son to himself, something more than bare forgiveness, gave him this letter to deliver to Philemon.

THE LETTER

I

Paul—from the prison in which he lies for Messiah Jesus’ sake—and Timotheus my brother,

to Philemon, our dear friend and sharer in our toil, and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the believers that meet in your house—

Grace be to you, and heart-peace, from God our Father, and from our Lord, Jesus the Messiah.

I make mention always of you, Philemon, in my prayers to my God, and it is always with thanksgiving. For I am hearing ever of the love and the faith that you show—a faith that looks up to our Lord Jesus, a love that flows out to all His consecrated ones—and so I pray that this faith which you share with us may have its perfect work in your recognition of this, that all the good which is in us is for Messiah Jesus' service.

Ah yes, great was the joy I felt, great the comfort, in the thought of your love; for through you have the hearts of God's consecrated ones received restful comfort—through you, Philemon, my brother!

And so, though in Messiah's name I might, without any misgiving, enjoin upon you a thing which it is but fitting that you should do, yet by our love do I appeal to you instead, and plead with you. I plead, not with authority, but simply as Paul, an old, old man—and now too I plead from a prison-cell, where I lie for Messiah Jesus' sake. I plead with you on behalf of my child, for him whose father I have, here in this prison, become—my child Onesimus. Onesimus—of little *service* was he to you in days gone by; but now, both to you and to me may he do loyal service. I send him back to you—ah, to me he is as a piece of my very heart! And I—gladly would I have kept him by my side, to render to me the service which you would render, if you could, here in the prison where I lie for God's Glad-tidings' sake. Without your sanction, however, I shrank from even wishing to do any such thing: I cannot desire any kindness of yours to seem wrung from you; it shall be wholly of your own free will. It may be, you know, that he was, just for a time, parted from you, in order that you might possess him unalienably, for ever after. But you will not look upon him as a slave any more—will you?—but as something above a slave, a brother, a dear brother—dear

above all to me!—then how much more so to you, since he will be yours both in human relations and divine?

If, then, you regard me as a sharer in your life's work, receive him as you would me. Whatever wrong he has done you in the past, whatever debt is still unpaid, let it stand in your account against me! I write this with my own hand—I *will repay it*: Paul.

I might say that it is you that are in *my* debt,—that to me you owe all you are—but no, I will not say it!

Ah, yes, brother mine, it is for *myself* I plead—render me this one loving service, for the love of our Lord! Give to my heart restful comfort, for the love of Messiah!

It is because I feel quite sure that you will yield to my appeal, that I have written thus. I know, oh, I know that you will do what I ask—ay, and more.

One thing beside:—prepare to receive me as your guest; for I am now in hopes of being restored to you—it will be in answer to *your* prayers.

Epaphras, who lies in prison with me in Messiah Jesus' keeping, greets you by me, as do Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, all sharers of my toil.

May the grace of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah, be with the spirits of you and yours.

THE LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS

[WRITTEN DURING THE FIRST IMPRISONMENT,
ABOUT 62 A.D.]

The Persons addressed. As in some of the best manuscripts the title 'Letter to the Ephesians' is not found, this is now generally regarded as a circular letter, copies of which were sent to various churches in Roman Asia. This view is borne out by the absence of personal salutations, an omission which might well seem strange after Paul had laboured there for three years, and had (*Acts* 20: 17) taken most affectionate leave of the elders of this church before his final departure for Jerusalem. It may be that a separate slip of salutations was attached to each letter, according to its destination.

Reason why it was written. This letter appears to have been called forth by no special errors or abuses; but the perils threatening the cause at Colossae may well have haunted the apostle's mind, and he could not be sure that the mischief might not be spreading to neighbouring churches. Hence we find no specific allusions to heresies which the Ephesian church had not yet encountered; but we do find that the writer aims at establishing the same great central truth, and guards the church by anticipation against the first approach of the new error. While there are many resemblances between the two letters, the main difference is that in the letter to the Colossians the writer combats definite error, in that to the Ephesians he develops truths which he knows will render the intrusion of that error impossible. The point of view, moreover, is somewhat shifted; in 'Colossians' he dwells upon Jesus as the Head of the Body, the Church: in 'Ephesians' he dwells upon the Church as being the Body of which Jesus is the Head.

THE LETTER

I

Paul, appointed through God's will, an apostle of Messiah Jesus,

to His consecrated ones who are at Ephesus, and who are loyal to their life in Messiah Jesus—

May grace and heart-peace descend on you from God our Father, and from our Lord, Jesus the Messiah.

All blessing be to God, to the Father of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah, Who hath pronounced a blessing on us by our union with Messiah, the benediction of all blessings of His Spirit that are found in the high heavens.

Yea, thus did He make choice of us, in choosing Him, ere the foundations of the world were laid: He chose us, that we should stand consecrate and spotless in His sight—in love He chose us:

Hymn of the New Dispensation

He claimed us for His own long ago,
To give us the charter of sonship to Himself,
Won through our Messiah,
So fulfilling the good pleasure of His will,
That praise might be rendered to the glorious manifestation
of His grace,

The grace that He so freely gave us
In the person of His Beloved.
For in His person we have, through the shedding of
His blood,
The true Redemption, which is the forgiveness of our
transgressions,

Rich and free as God's grace is rich—
The grace which He made to overflow unto us
In outpourings of manifold wisdom and discernment:
For He revealed to us the mystic secret of His will,
According to that His determination
Which He had formed within Himself

To carry out the dispensation that waited but the fulness of the time.

For His purpose was to re-unite all things

Under Messiah as their Head—

Things in the heavens, things on the earth—

All, all made one in Him.

Yes, and it was solely by our union with Jesus that we Jews were taken for God's own inheritance; for we were claimed long since as His,—according to the purpose of Him who is the efficient Cause in all things, making them execute the devising of His will,—that we might exist for the praise of His Majesty Divine, we, who, ere His appearing, hoped in our Messiah. In Him you Gentiles too, when you had heard the proclamation of the truth, the Glad-tidings of your salvation, in Him you too believed: and on you was set His seal, even the Spirit that was promised, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit that is the earnest of all that we shall inherit, the Spirit given to ensure the full redemption of what God hath claimed for His own, for the praise of His Majesty Divine.

For this reason I too, ever since I heard of the faith centred in the Lord Jesus, which lives among you, and of your love towards all believers, have never ceased giving thanks on your behalf. And still do I make mention of you in my prayers, asking that the God of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, the Father glory-clad, may, in bestowing the full knowledge of Himself, bestow on you the Spirit which is manifested in divine illumination and insight into the mysteries of God, and may flood with light the eyes of your understanding. So shall you know what it really is, that hope which springs up in those who hearken His invitation: so shall you know what riches are comprised in the magnificence of the inheritance which He gives you among His consecrated ones: so shall you know what is the transcendent greatness of His power displayed toward us who believe—a power measured by the impulse exerted by the might of the strength of God. This He put

forth in the person of our Messiah, in raising Him from the dead, in throning Him at His own right hand in the high heavens, up above all the celestial hierarchy—Dominions, Authorities, Powers, and Lordships—above every title of sovereignty that is known by any name, not only in this present universe, but also in that which is yet to be. Thus He ‘put all things, like subjects, beneath His feet.’ And this Supreme One has He given, as its Head, to His church, which indeed is Messiah’s Body, which is filled with the presence of Him who fills the universe, with all that is therein.

II

Yea, to you also has God given life from the dead—for dead you were, slain by your trespasses and sins, in an atmosphere of which you had once passed your lives, following the tendency of the present age, controlled by the Ruler of the Kingdom of the Lower Air, that demon-spirit which now is so active in the children of disobedience. Ah, we too once, all of us, were of the number of these, ridden by the passions of our sensual nature, obeying the impulses of that nature and of its dark imaginings. Yes, we were then, by the conditions of our being, heirs—not of God, but—of the wrath of God, as much so as the veriest heathen. But

Hymn of the Grace of God

God, for that rich He is in mercy,
 By reason of the mighty love wherewith He loved
 us,
 Even when in trespasses we lay dead,
 Thrilled us with the same new life wherewith
 He quickened our Messiah.
 —By free grace alone have ye obtained salvation!—
 And with Him He raised us from the death-sleep,
 And with Him throned us in the high Heavens,
 By virtue of our union with Messiah Jesus.

This did He, to show forth, in the ages now imminent,
 The transcendent wealth of His free grace
 In loving kindness to us
 Who are united to Messiah Jesus:
 —For by that same free grace have ye obtained salvation,
 On condition of faith alone,
 Salvation, not through your own striving—
 From God it comes, His gift—
 Not by fulfilment of the Law's commands (for He would
 have none boast);
 Nay, but His handiwork are we,
 Who in Messiah Jesus' person have been re-created
 That we may do good deeds—a path which God has made
 ready for us,
 That our feet may walk therein.

Therefore remember that you, who once were, by the evidence of your bodies, Gentiles, you who are still styled 'the Uncircumcision' by that self-styled 'Circumcision' which is a mere mark on the flesh made by human hands—remember that you were in those days excluded from all part in the Messiah, counted aliens from the nationality of Israel, foreigners without share in the covenants given by God's promise. You had no hope, you were without God in that heathen world of yours. But now, by your union with Messiah Jesus, you, who were once so far removed, have been drawn near by the blood of Messiah Jesus; for

Hymn of the Great Reconciliation

He is our peace,
 He who made Jew and Gentile one people,
 Yea, who broke down that party-wall of severance,
 Who in His crucified body destroyed the cause of
 our enmity,
 To wit, the Law—a thing of ordinances embodied in
 enactments—

That He might re-create the two, in union with Himself,
into one new man,
 So making peace,
 And might reconcile us both, Jews and Gentiles,
 In one corporate body, to God,
By means of His Cross, slaying our enmity upon it.
And, when He came, He proclaimed the Glad-tidings of
 peace—
 Peace to you Gentiles, who once were far from God,
 Peace to the Jews, who were near Him;
For through Him have we, both we and you, united in one
 Spirit,
 Admission to the presence of the Father.
 So then foreigners no more nor outlanders are ye,
But fellow-citizens are ye of His consecrated ones,
 And members of God's household.
A temple are ye, built up on the foundation of His apostles
 and prophets,
 Jesus the Messiah Himself being the chief corner-stone,
 In whose person all the building is being knit together,
 And is taking more perfect shape as a sanctuary
 Consecrated by the presence of the Lord.
So, by union with Him, you, as well as we, are being together
 built up,
 To form a habitation wherein God will dwell
 By the presence of His Spirit.

III

For this reason I, Paul, the servant of Messiah Jesus, who now lie in prison for having preached to you Gentiles—you have surely heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was entrusted to me that I might dispense it to you. You have heard that it was by direct revelation that the mystic secret of God's purpose was made known to me. This I have briefly indicated above in my letter: from it you can, as you read, infer my insight into the Mystic Secret of Messiah. This was

in past ages not revealed to the sons of men in the fulness with which it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His consecrated apostles and prophets. Its purport is, that the Gentiles have now a share in the inheritance divine, that they, too, are members of Messiah's Body, that they too, through acceptance of the Glad-tidings, have part in the promise fulfilled in Messiah Jesus. Of these tidings I became a dispensing steward, in accordance with the gift of the free grace of God, bestowed on me so amply that only the heart-stirring impulse of God's might can be the measure of it. Ay, on me, the meanest—more than the meanest—of believers was bestowed this grace, that I should tell the Gentiles the Glad-tidings of the riches Messiah brings—the treasure no human search could have found; that I should uplift a light whereby all may see what it means, this stewardship of the Mystic Secret which has been from all time hidden away in the mind of God, who created all things. So was it done in order that now unto angelic Dominions and Authorities in the high heavens might be displayed, through the channel of the church, the many-sided wisdom of God. This was in accordance with His purpose formed long ages since, which He executed in the person of Messiah Jesus our Lord, by our union with whom we have courage to speak to God, and access to His presence in the confidence which is born of faith in Jesus. Because of all this, I beg of you not to lose heart when you hear of the afflictions that befall me in your cause. Let it rather be a proud thought that they are for *you!*

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father,—the great first cause of all who claim a father, alike in Heaven and on earth. I pray that He may, with a fulness measured only by the wealth of His own glory, vouchsafe to you to be made strong with power infused by His Spirit into your inmost nature. I pray that Messiah may, through your faith, make His home in your hearts; that so, like trees, firm-rooted in love,—like temples, having a firm foundation in love—you may, in common with all His consecrated ones, be fully able

to comprehend what is the breadth, the length, the depth, the height—ay, really to *know* the love of Messiah (which transcends all ‘illumination,’) that you may be filled with all the plenitude of God.

Doxology Chant

To Him who is able to accomplish all—more than all things,
Far transcending all our prayers, all our imaginings,
To an extent whose measure is that mighty impulse which
thrills us through,
To Him be all the glory in the church, in the Body of
Messiah Jesus,
Unto all the generations of the aeon that comprehends the
ages! Amen.

IV

I appeal to you, then, from the prison in which I lie in the keeping of our Lord, to order your lives in a manner worthy of the summons to His service which you received from God. Be yours a life of utter lowliness, of gentleness, of mutual forbearance. Show to one another the patience of love. Be earnest to maintain the unity of which the Spirit is the author, linked together by the chain of God’s peace. Unity!—one Body, one Spirit, just as one was the hope that breathed in the Call that you heard. One Lord is ours, one faith, one baptism; one God, Father of all, sovereign over all, pervading all, and in all indwelling.

Not indiscriminately, however, on each of us was bestowed the bounty of God’s grace, but according to the measure of its bestowal by our Messiah. This is the significance of the words, ‘HE WENT UP TO HEAVEN’S HEIGHT; HE LED CAPTIVE A TRAIN OF VANQUISHED FOES; HE BESTOWED GIFTS ON MEN.’—(*Psalms* 68: 18). Now, what can ‘He went up’ imply, except that He first came down to the lower regions of earth? Yes, He who came down is even He who went up high above all

the heavens, that His presence might pervade all things. And for His gifts—some He endowed as apostles, some as inspired preachers, some as heralds of the Glad-tidings, some as shepherds of His flock and as teachers. His intentions therein were to effect the perfecting of believers, and to carry out the administration-work of His church, and the building up of Messiah's Body. And so shall His work speed till we all attain to unity in faith and in true knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfected humanity, to nothing less than the standard of Messiah's own perfection; that so we may be children no longer, like ships wave-tost, and drifting before each gust of teaching,—the prey of the fraudulent cunning of men, and of their unscrupulous trickery—drifting on to the maze of error's reefs; but that our life may be all truth, enfolded by love, and that we may grow up in all respects into the likeness of Jesus, of Him who is our Head, our Messiah. From that Head is the whole Body knit into one harmonious frame, is a union of all its functions inter-linked, according to the well-proportioned vitality of each individual part, and so promotes its corporate growth towards one end—its development in a life of love.

This then I say—I solemnly adjure you, as in God's presence, to live no longer as (like your old selves) the Gentiles live, in the folly of their soul, with their intellect benighted, self-banished from the life God gives, through their deep-seated ignorance, and through the callousness of their hearts. In their moral apathy they have surrendered themselves a prey to licentiousness, to make a business of the practice of every kind of impurity with fierce eagerness. Far other is the lesson you have learnt from the knowledge of Messiah—if, indeed, it was His voice that you hearkened, if in union with Him you were taught your lesson, truth as it is incarnate in Jesus; if you learnt that you must discard the outworn type of humanity which characterised your former life, the humanity which is ever rushing ruinward as it follows the lusts that are born of delusion; if you have learnt that you must pass through a process of renewal by the Spirit dwelling in your mind, and

that you must clothe yourselves in the new humanity that has been created in God's image, in a state of righteousness and holiness born of the Truth. Therefore, since you have done with falsity, 'SPEAK EVER TRUTH EACH ONE WITH HIS NEIGHBOUR'—(*Zechariah* 8: 16); for we are members mutually of one body.

Hymn of the New Life on Earth

'In your anger let there be no sin';
 Let not the sun go down while yet your wrath is hot,
 Nay, give the devil no such vantage-ground.
 Let him who was wont to steal be no more a thief:
 Rather let him toil, doing honest work with his own
 hands,
 So that he may have enough to spare for the
 needy.
 Let no speech that may pollute them pass your lips:
 Let there be only such as shall help your fellows' spiritual
 progress, according to their need,
 That it may impart a blessing to them that hear it;
 So refrain ye from grieving the Holy Spirit of God,
 Which brooded over you when you were sealed His own,
 Ready for the day when He shall come to lead home His
 redeemed.
 Let all bitterness and passion,
 All wrath, and railing, and slander, and
 Be banished from you, and all malice withal.
 But learn to be kind to one another,
 Loving-hearted, ready to forgive each other,
 Even as God, in Messiah's person, forgave you.

V

Make God your example, then, as His children dearly loved.
 Walk in ways of love, love like Messiah's love for us, which
 drew Him to yield Himself up for us, as an offering to God, a
 victim slain, to be wafted up in fragrance of grateful odour.

But fornication, impurity, or grasping greed—let their very names be unknown among you, as befits His consecrated ones. So also lubricity, ribaldry, or innuendo—they are discreditable. Rather let your language be all thanksgiving. You know all this, aware as you are that every fornicator, every debauchee, every covetous man—who is in effect an idolater—is excluded from all inheritance in the Kingdom of Messiah and of God. Let no one delude you with sophistical excuses for such vices. It is in retribution for these very sins that God's wrath is ever descending upon the sons of disobedience. Do not then make yourselves their accomplices. Darkness incarnate you once were; but now, by your life in our Lord, you are light! Order your lives as men native-born to the Light. For the fruit of the Light appears in every form of goodness, righteousness, truth. So will you in your own experience prove what is acceptable to the Lord. Have no partnership with works of darkness, barren of fruit as they are: nay, rather denounce them. The secret sins perpetrated by those sons of darkness are too infamous even to specify. But the vileness of them all is bared to view by the light, when they are so denounced: for everything that is exposed to the daylight becomes part of the realm of light. So your hymn says,

Rouse thee, O slumbering one,
And from the dead stand up,
And Messiah shall be thy day-dawn!

See to it, then, that you walk purposefully—not like witless creatures, but like wise men. Grasp at each opportunity (like merchants who eagerly buy up a scarce commodity): for 'the evil days' are on us. Keeping this end in view, do not be unthinking Christians, but try to comprehend what is the Lord's will. As a special caution—do not, in your church-gatherings, drink wine to intoxication; that way debauchery lies: but quaff deep of God's Spirit. Speak out your thoughts to each other in psalms, in hymns, in chants inspired by the Holy Spirit. Let the sound of your singing, let the music of

your hearts go up to the Lord in unceasing thanksgiving for all that He sends you, thanksgiving offered in the name of our Lord, of Jesus the Messiah, to God the Father.

At the same time, in reverence for Messiah, yield submission to each other. Wives, do you yield submission to your lawful husbands; do it as service to our Lord. For a husband is head of his wife, even as Messiah is Head of the church. He is her Saviour, and she is His Body. Well then, just as the church submits herself to Messiah, so also should wives show submission in every way to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, even as Messiah also loved the church, and gave Himself to death for her, in order that He might purify her by the laver of the Water of Baptism, might hallow her by the Word of God, and so might Himself set at His own side the church, His glorious bride, bearing nor stain nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, but that she might be holy and flawless. Even so perfectly ought husbands too to love their own wives, as being in effect their own bodies. He who loves his own wife is thereby loving himself. No man ever hated his own person: he nourishes it, he cherishes it, just as Messiah, too, nourishes and cherishes the church. Well, we are members of His Body: so that there is a sense in which here too the words of Scripture apply:—‘FOR THIS REASON SHALL A MAN FORSAKE FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL BE KNIT TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.’—(*Genesis* 2: 24). This is a mystic doctrine of deep import—I refer to the correspondence between the relation of Messiah to His church and that of man to wife. Be that as it may, let each man of you, without exception, love his wife as his own self, and let the wife remember to reverence her husband.

VI

Children, obey your parents, as part of your duty to our Lord: this is their right. ‘HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER’—that is the first commandment that carries with it a promise—‘THAT BLESSING MAY BEFALL THEE, AND THAT THOU MAYEST HAVE LONG LIFE ON THE EARTH.’—(*Exodus* 20: 12;

Deuteronomy 5: 16). On the other hand, you fathers, do not you chafe your children's tempers; but train them up with such discipline, such admonition, as is worthy of our Lord.

Bondmen, still render obedience, single-hearted obedience, coupled with inward and outward respect, to your earthly masters: do it as service to Messiah. Do it not merely when their eyes are on you—as those who court but men's approval; do it as bondmen of Messiah, who are performing the will of God with all their soul. Render your service with cheerful loyalty, as to our Lord, and not to men, bearing in mind that, whatever good work a man does, he shall receive full requital from our Lord, whether he be bondman or freeman.

And you who are masters, act towards them in the same spirit. Refrain from the too-common practice of threatening: bear in mind that in Heaven there is One who is your Master no less than theirs. There is no regard for social distinctions at His bar.

For the rest—

Hymn of the Christian Warrior

Be ye strengthened in the Lord's presence,

And in the power of His might.

Array yourselves in the armour-panoply that God supplies,

That you may be able to hold your post unflinching
Against the Devil's stratagems.

For we have to close in grapple not with human flesh and blood alone,

But with Principalities, with Powers,
With the Lords of Darkness whose present sway is world-wide,

With the spirit-host of Wicked Beings that haunt the upper air.

Therefore take up the God-given panoply,
That you may be able in that grim day to face the foe unflinchingly,

To achieve all your duty, and to stand unstaggered still.
Stand firm then—

Your loins girded with the belt of truth,
Arrayed in the corslet of righteousness,
Your feet shod with that preparedness to face the foe
Which is a fruit of the Glad-tidings of peace.
To cover them all, take up the shield of faith,
Fenced by which you will be able to quench all the fire-darts
of that Wicked One.
The helmet also of salvation receive ye from His
hand,
And the sword of the Spirit,
Which is the Word of God.

So stand, praying the while with prayer on prayer, with petition on petition, at every season, stirred by the Spirit: and, that you may do so, be vigilant ever, with uttermost earnestness, with all fulness of petition, for all your fellow-believers. Ay, and for me too pray, that to me there may be vouchsafed fit utterance, when I open my lips, fearlessly to make known the Mystic Secret of the Glad-tidings, on behalf of which I am an ambassador—an ambassador in chains! Pray that I may fearlessly proclaim its message, as I am in duty bound to utter it.

In order that you, like your sister churches, may have news of my condition and my doings, Tychicus, my dear brother, my loyal helper in our Lord's work, will inform you fully. I have sent him to you with this very object, that you may know all about me, and that he may cheer your hearts.

May peace, and love linked with their faith, descend on our brothers from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus, the Messiah.

God's grace abide with all them that with love imperishable love our Lord, Jesus the Messiah!

LETTERS WRITTEN AFTER ST. PAUL'S LIBERATION

FOR the events of the life of St. Paul after the close of the narrative of the Acts, our only direct source of information is his own letters. It is the unanimous tradition of the church that he was tried at Rome, and acquitted, and that for some two years he was a free man. As to his movements during that time there is no certainty, and little agreement. He may possibly have carried out his intention, expressed in the letter to the Romans, of bearing on the Glad-tidings to Spain; but there is no trace of such a journey to be found in the letters which follow. He probably fulfilled his promise of visiting Philemon at Colossae: he speaks of leaving Ephesus for Macedonia: he refers to going with Titus to Crete, and to leaving him there on his departure. It may well be that he went round to all the churches he could visit in the time. We find him asking Titus to join him at Nicopolis, a flourishing seaport in Epirus on the East Coast of the Adriatic. Here it was, perhaps, that he was re-arrested, and sent to Rome to stand a second trial, with far less chance of acquittal. During his absence the Great Fire of Rome had occurred. Nero, charged with having caused it for his own amusement, was glad to shift the blame on to the shoulders of the Christians, whom (no doubt from their lack of sympathy with the heathen festivities which played so large a part in social life) popular prejudice had come to regard as 'the enemies of the human race.'

The tolerance or favour with which the government may have been inclined at first to regard them had given place to ruthless hostility, and the 'ringleader of the sect' had small chance of escape.

THE FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHEUS

[WRITTEN ABOUT 67 A.D.]

Person addressed. Timotheus, son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother, was converted by Paul on his first missionary journey, at Lystra. On the second missionary journey, he became the apostle's companion, and thenceforth was his constant helper, loving, loved and utterly trusted. Young and shrinkingly modest as he was, Paul repeatedly sent him on important missions, as to encourage the Macedonian churches in the midst of persecution, and to represent the apostle's authority in the face of disaffection at Corinth. We find him comforting and supporting Paul during his imprisonment at Rome. After the apostle's liberation they together visited Asia, and there Paul entrusted to him the superintendence of the church at Ephesus.

It was to advise and strengthen him to bear the burden of the responsibilities and perplexities of this charge that Paul wrote (probably from Macedonia) the letter which follows.

THE LETTER

I

Paul, appointed an apostle of Jesus the Messiah, by command of God our Saviour and of Messiah Jesus our Hope,
to Timotheus my true-born son in the life
of faith—

Grace, mercy, peace be yours, given from God
the Father and from Messiah Jesus our Lord.

I requested you, when I was starting for Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus: I now repeat the request. My object was, that you should oppose your authority to the attempts of certain men to set up opposition teaching, to give importance to legends and interminable genealogies,¹ such as breed mere speculations instead of the attainment of God's blessings which are involved in the exercise of faith. On the contrary, the end and object of God's commandment is the kindling of love, such as springs from a pure heart, a good conscience, and unfeigned faith. But there are some who have missed all these, who have swerved aside from the true path into mere purposeless talk. They would fain set up for teachers of the Mosaic Law; but really have no true conception of the arguments they use, nor of the subjects on which they dogmatise so positively. I quite recognise that this Law is an excellent thing for a man who conforms to its true principles. But he must recognise this, that the Law is enacted as a check, not on the righteous (as we have been made through faith in Jesus), but on the lawless and unruly, on the irreligious and sinful, on the unholy and the irreverent, on parricides and matricides, on murderers, fornicators, sodomites, slave-raiders, liars, perjurers, and whatever sin besides is opposed to wholesome teaching. To recognise this is to grasp the spirit of the Glad-tidings of the glory of God ever-blessed, the proclamation of which was entrusted to me. Thankful am I to Him who filled me with strength, to Messiah Jesus^o our Lord, thankful that He did so trust me, that He appointed me to this stewardship—me, who previously was a blasphemer, a persecutor, a brutal ruffian! Yet was I compassionated by God, because I did what I did in the ignorance of my unbelief. Nay, the grace of our Lord was actually given me in overflowing measure, accompanied by faith and by the love which is centred in Messiah Jesus. Full of truth are those words—they merit universal acceptance—

¹ Of celestial powers, emanations from the divine, endless gradations of which were invented. See Introduction to Colossians.

Beginning of Creed-Chant

Messiah Jesus came into the world
To save sinners.

—and a sinner was I, pre-eminently so. But it was for this end that I was so compassionated, that in me, me above all, Messiah might display the full measure of His forbearance, thus furnishing an example to encourage all who were hereafter to rest their faith on Him, for the winning of eternal life.

Doxology-Chant

To the King of all the ages,
The immortal, the invisible, the only God,
Be honour and glory unto all ages of ages!

This charge do I commit in trust to you, Timotheus my son, in accordance with the prophecies that heralded your work,¹ that in the inspiration of them you serve in this glorious campaign, keeping fast your hold on faith and a good conscience. Some there are who have thrown the latter overboard, and so have in shipwreck lost the former. Hymenaeus and Alexander are instances in point, men whom I have solemnly handed over to Satan, that they may, in the school of suffering, be taught to cease to blaspheme.

II

To resume—I exhort in the first place that petitions, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be offered regularly for all men, with special mention of kings, and, in fact, of all who are in authority, so that we may live an unharassed life of inward peace in all reverence for God and in self-respect. For such prayer is a right thing, and is acceptable in the presence of our Saviour God, whose will it is that *all* men be

¹ The reference is probably to prophecies uttered when Timotheus was consecrated to the work. Compare Chapter 4: 14, and Acts 13: 1, 2.

delivered from destruction and attain to full knowledge of truth. That truth is the Messiahship of Jesus: for, as there is but one God, so also there is but one Mediator between God and humanity, Messiah Jesus, Himself man. Now, it was for *all* men that He gave Himself a ransom. Such is the import of that testimony, promulgated in God's own good time. And for the proclamation of this I was appointed God's herald and apostle—I speak literal truth; I lie not!—His instructor of the Gentiles in the aspirations of faith, in the knowledge of the Truth.

I recommend that in every gathering-place it be the men only who offer the public prayers to which I referred, lifting heavenward unsullied hands, nursing the while no secret grudge, harbouring no lurking scepticism. I recommend that women, for their part, array themselves in decorous attire, harmonising with their modesty and self-control, not in braided tresses, in gold, in pearls, nor in costly raiment, but—as becomes women professing the fear of God,—by good deeds let them be adorned. Let a woman be in your gatherings a learner—not a speaker—in unvarying submission. To a woman I give no commission to be a teacher, nor to lord it over man: she must abide in silence. The distinction dates from the origin of our race: Adam was the first created, then Eve. Moreover, it was not Adam that was actually deceived by the tempter, but it was entirely through her being utterly deceived that woman has become involved in transgression. Yet through her motherhood shall woman be saved, if your women swerve not from faith and love and self-consecration, coupled with virtuous self-control.

III

Most true are the words of your ordination-chant—

If a man yearns for the overseership in the church,
He aspires to do noble work.

The church-overseer, then, ought to be of irreproachable character, and be husband of but one wife. He must be a man of sobriety, of self-restraint, of well-ordered life; must be hospitable, and have a gift for teaching. He must not be excitable and violent over wine. He must be courteous, uncontentious, not avaricious. He must rule his own household decorously, keeping his children in submission, with perfect dignity. If a man, in fact, does not know how to rule his own family, how can he be expected to take charge of the church of God? He should not be a new convert, lest he grow besotted with pride, and so fall under that judgment passed of old upon the devil. He ought also to bear an exemplary character among non-Christians, lest his reputation be blasted, and so he be trapped in the devil's snare.

Church-stewards, in like manner, ought to be dignified, not shifty, not over-addicted to wine, above getting money by questionable means. With an unsullied conscience must they hold the Mystic Secret of the Faith. Let their character be first investigated: then, if no breath of accusation has touched them, let them exercise the stewardship.

The stewardesses, in like manner, should be dignified, not scandal-mongers, sober, thoroughly trustworthy. Let church-stewards be husbands of one wife only: let them decorously rule their children and their own households. I urge these cautions, because men who have creditably discharged their stewardship attain a higher platform in the Christian life, and become fearless champions of the faith that is centred in Messiah Jesus.

I write the foregoing directions, although I am hoping to visit you very soon: still, I may be delayed, so I write, in order that you may know what line of action you ought to take in the House of God, that is to say, in the Church of the Living God, which is the pillar and mainstay of the Truth.

I have referred above to the 'Mystic Secret of our religion.' Beyond dispute, grand is that Mystic Secret, as set forth in our confession-chant—

Creed-Chant (*contd.*)

In human form was Messiah revealed:
By spirit-power was He proved the Just One:
 To angels He appeared:
Among Gentiles was He proclaimed:
In the world was He by faith accepted:
 In glory was He received up into Heaven.

IV

Yet, do not expect to find unanimity even in these great essentials. The Spirit expressly warns us that

Hymn of Christian Liberty

In the latter times some will revolt from the Faith:
They will give heed to deluding spirits and to doctrines
 devil-taught,
Trapped by the hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are
 seared,
 Who would fain prohibit marriage,
 Who bid you abstain from food
Created by God, to be partaken of with thanksgiving
By all who believe and who have recognised the truth.
 For each thing created by God is good;
 And nothing is to be refused,
 So it be received with thanksgiving:
For through the Word of God and through the prayer for
 His blessing

It is hallowed.

If you impress these things on the members of the church, you will be a worthy steward of Messiah Jesus, nurtured as you are in the words of the Faith and of the exalted teaching which you have followed. But with irreverent legends—mere grandams' tales—have nothing to do. Train yourself for the race of godliness:—

From a Hymn of the Christian Life

Of small advantage is the discipline which stops at the body:
But godliness is of advantage for all things,
Since it includes a promise for the present life,
And for that which is yet to be.

Full of truth are these words: they might well be adopted in all the churches, with what follows:—

To this end we toil, we strain in athlete-strife,
Because we have set our hope on the Living God,
Who is the Saviour of all men,
Of believers most of all.

On such lines charge and teach the church. Let no one treat you slightly because you are young. Make yourself an example to the believers, in your speech, in your conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, give constant attention to the public reading of the Scriptures, to personal appeals, to exposition. Do not cease to cultivate the divine gift that is in you, which was conferred on you, through the medium of an inspired revelation, at the time when the hands of the elders were laid on you. Practise the things I have mentioned: let them be the atmosphere of your life, in order that your spiritual growth may be evident to all. Give watchful heed to your own character, as well as to your teaching. Be unremitting in attention to the duties above-mentioned. On your doing this, depends the salvation both of yourself and your hearers.

V

Never reprimand an aged believer; but plead with him as with a father. Treat the younger men as your brothers, the elder women as mothers, the younger as sisters, with utter purity.

As to widows:—give the honour of a place on the maintenance-list to those who are in reality utterly bereaved. But if any widow have children or grandchildren, let them be

reminded that their first duty is to display filial piety, and to repay their parents for all their care; for this is acceptable in God's sight. She, however, who is absolutely bereaved—I mean, who is left alone in the world—has set her hopes upon God alone: she perseveres in supplications and prayers night and day. But the existence of the woman who lives in wasteful luxury is a living death. Thus charge them, that they may be irreproachable. If, in fact, a man neglects to provide for his own relatives, especially those of his own family, he has practically renounced the faith: he is worse than the heathen who have never embraced it.

A widow, to be placed on the official list, must be not less than sixty years old. She should have been the wife of one husband: she should bear a high character for works of benevolence. She must be certified as having reared children; as having hospitably received our missionaries, and washed their travel-stained feet; as having relieved the afflicted; as having made the performance of every good work her aim. But to younger widows you must refuse official recognition; for they are apt to grow restive under the restraints of Messiah's yoke, and then we find that they want to re-marry. Thus they bear the condemnation of having broken their first pledge.¹ Besides, these learn idle habits, as they go round on their house-to-house visits: and not only do they grow idle, but become gossipmongers as well, and meddlers, who carry discreditable tales. I recommend, therefore, that the younger widows should re-marry, bear children, rule the house, and give no occasion for reviling to the opponents of the Faith. The warning is not unneeded: some of them have already turned aside out of the true path to follow Satan. If any female member of the church have widow-relatives dependent on her, let her relieve them, and let not the church be burdened with their maintenance, that it may relieve the widows who are really destitute.

Elders who discharge their functions well should be held

¹ Of absolute devotion to the duties of the position conferred on them when placed on the roll.

doubly worthy of the honour of a place on the maintenance-list, especially those who work hard in preaching and teaching. Here the words of Scripture are applicable, 'THOU SHALT NOT MUZZLE THE OX AS HE TREADETH OUT THE GRAIN.'—(*Deuteronomy* 25: 4); and, as our Lord said, 'THE LABOURER IS ENTITLED TO HIS WAGE.'

Take no notice of an accusation brought against an elder, unless it be substantiated by two—or better, three—witnesses. To habitual sinners administer a public rebuke, so as to strike terror into others.

I solemnly adjure you, as in the presence of God, and of Messiah Jesus, and of God's chosen angels,¹ to observe these injunctions unswayed by personal prejudice, uninfluenced by partiality. Do not hastily lay hands of absolution² on any offender: do not thus become a sharer in the sins of others, but keep yourself taintless—(not, however, by gratuitous asceticism: on the contrary, do not continue to be a water-drinker; use wine in moderation, to stimulate digestion, and to relieve your frequent ailments):—remember, though the sins of some men are glaring, seeming to usher them onward to God's judgment-bar, the sins of some may be hidden here, yet none the less they dog their steps ever. The converse, of course, is true also; of men's good works, some are conspicuous, and those that are not so cannot for ever be kept secret.

VI

All members of the church who, as bondmen, are under the yoke, must esteem their own masters worthy of the fullest respect, so that the name of God, and His teaching, may not be brought into disrepute. But those whose masters are, like themselves, members of the church, must not treat them with disrespectful familiarity, just because they are brethren; but let them serve them all the more respectfully, for the very

¹ Chosen especially as God's messengers to men, as Gabriel.

² Or, of ordination; but, as Bishop Ellicott shows, this does not so well accord with what follows.

reason that these who claim their loyal service are believers, and dear to God. Thus teach and thus exhort.

But if there be any one who sets up for an independent thinker and teacher, and refuses his adhesion to the wholesome message of our Lord, Jesus the Messiah, and the teaching which is based on the fear of God, I can only say that he is besotted with the pride of ignorance: he is but crazed about speculations and verbal polemics. Nothing comes from them but jealousy, quarrels, slanders, base suspicions, and embittered wranglings of men whose mind is a moral ruin, who are now judicially deprived of perception of truth, who imagine that religion is a means of getting wealth. So it is, indeed; religion, allied to a contented spirit, *is* a source of great wealth: for

Hymn of Contentment

Nothing did we bring into the world,
To teach us to remember that we can carry nothing out:
But, while we have food and clothing,
With these will we content us.
But they that crave to be rich
Fall into temptation's snare,¹
And into many witless and baneful desires
Which overwhelm men in pits of ruin and destruction:
For love of money is a root whence spring all evils.
Some have clutched thereat, have gone astray from
the faith,
And have impaled themselves on anguish
manifold.

But you, O man of God, shun these things: let the prizes for which you race be righteousness, the fear of God, faith, love, steadfast patience, meek-heartedness. Wrestle in the glorious struggle of the Faith, grasp the prize of life eternal,

¹ The metaphor of this and the lines which follow may be taken from the wild beast which, leaping at the bait hung over a pit, falls in, and is impaled on the stake below.

to the winning of which you were summoned, and confessed the glorious confession in the sight of many witnesses. I charge you, in the presence of God who keeps all things in life, in the presence of Messiah Jesus, who at Pontius Pilate's bar testified—a glorious confession!—I charge you to keep the commandment flawless, irreproachable, until the Appearing of our Lord, Jesus the Messiah, which in His own good time He shall display—

Doxology Chant

That blessed and only Potentate,
King of all that reign, Lord of all who bear lordship,
Who alone hath immortality,
Who dwelleth in light unapproachable,
Whom none of men hath seen, nor can see,
Unto Him be honour and might eternal! Amen!

Charge those who are rich in the wealth of this present world not to be haughty, not to rest their hopes on the uncertain tenure of riches, but upon God who provides us with all things in abundance for our enjoyment. Charge them to do kind deeds, to be rich in good actions, to be generous, ready to share with others. So will they be laying up treasure for themselves, even a fair foundation for the future, so that they may grasp the prize of the life that is life indeed.

Timotheus, guard your trust! Shun always the irreverent babble, the dialectic tricks of what misnames itself 'spiritual illumination,' which some men are ever parading, and so, in dealing with the faith, have shot wide of the mark of truth.

God's grace be with you and yours.

THE LETTER TO TITUS

[WRITTEN ABOUT 67 A.D.]

Person addressed. Titus is believed to have been converted by Paul on his visit to Cyprus, in his first missionary journey. The question as to whether the apostle was prevailed upon, by the clamour of the Judaising party, at the time of the ' Council of Jerusalem ' (50 A.D.) to circumcise him, has been much debated. Paul's own language (*Galatians* 2: 3) appears (in the original) so involved, that directly opposite conclusions have been drawn from it; but the generally received opinion is that the concession was refused on principle. Titus seems to have been a man of strong and energetic character, and perhaps did much to save the situation during the difficulties at Corinth in 57 A.D.

When and by whom the Gospel was carried to Crete we do not know; but somewhere about 66 A.D. Paul and Titus visited the island, and did something towards consolidating the work there, and laying good foundations for future progress. On his departure, Paul left Titus there as overseer of the Cretan church. Recognising that the character of the people, proverbially untrustworthy, vicious, and sensual, was such as to render his task a difficult one, he wrote this letter, probably from Macedonia, to advise him on church-organisation, and to strengthen his hands.

THE LETTER

I

Paul, a bondman of God, and an apostle of Jesus the Messiah, appointed for the furtherance of the faith of God's chosen

ones, and to secure that recognition of the truth on which true religion is based, and which is stayed upon the hope of life eternal, that life which God, who deceives not, promised before the epochs of the ages began; though He waited till His own good time to make known His Message in that proclamation which was entrusted to me according to the commandment of our Saviour God—

to Titus, who is my true-born
son, by profession of the faith we both share—

Grace descend on you, and peace,
from God the Father, and from Messiah Jesus our Saviour.

The special object with which I left you in Crete was, that you might supplement the deficiencies of church-organisation there, that you might, in particular, appoint in the various towns Elders, as I commissioned you. The conditions of eldership are, that a man be above reproach, be husband of one wife, that his children be believers whose character bears no slur of dissolute living or insubordination to authority. The above are essentials: for a church-overseer *must* be beyond reproach (as being God's steward): he must not be opinionated nor irascible. He must not be excitable and violent over wine; must be above getting money by disreputable means. He must, on the contrary, be hospitable to strangers, and be a lover of the good. He must practise self-control, be fair-minded, pure-hearted, and temperate. He must be a champion of the creed that is in faithful accordance with our teaching, so as to be able to stimulate others by wholesome instruction, and to refute opponents. This last is a necessary qualification; because there are among you a number of undisciplined praters, soul-deceivers—particularly those of the reactionary party of Judaism; and these must be silenced. They are unsettling the faith of whole families, by teaching, for the sake of disreputable gain, tenets which they have no right to teach. One of themselves, a seer of their own nation, said

‘Cretans are liars aye, fell vipers, gluttonous sluggards’;¹

and this indictment is really true. Because it is true, reprimand your people in uncompromising terms, to bring them back to a healthy condition in the Faith, that they may cease to attach importance to Jewish fables, and to mere precepts of men who turn their backs on the truth. These tell you that such and such things are ‘unclean.’ *I* tell you that to the clean-hearted all things are clean; but to tainted and unbelieving men, such as they, nothing is clean. Their very mind and conscience, in fact, are tainted. They profess to know God; but by their actions they renounce Him. They are utterly loathsome, disobedient to the faith, and proved by the test to be unfit for any good work whatever.

II

But you—do you continue to make your speeches harmonise with our healthy teaching. Urge the aged men to be sober, to be self-respecting, to practise self-control, to cultivate a healthy condition of faith, of love, of steadfast endurance. So also tell the aged women to take care that their demeanour reflects their inward holiness. They must not be scandal-mongers, not slaves to drinking habits. They should be teachers of virtue, qualified to school in self-control the young women, to teach them to love their husbands and their children, to be discreet and chaste, to recognise that their sphere is home, to be amiable and submissive to their own husbands, so that no slander may assail the Word of God. On similar lines exhort the younger men to practise self-restraint.

In all respects, furnish an example of good actions in your own person. In your teaching display purity of motive, dignity, vigorous, irrefutable argument, so that your opponent may be put to the blush when he finds no loophole for traducing you.

¹ This line occurs in the ‘Oracles’ of Epimenides, and the first half of it in the ‘Hymn to Zeus’ of Callimachus.

Direct bondmen to be submissive to their own masters, to try to give them entire satisfaction. Warn them not to answer back, not to pilfer, but to display loyal fidelity throughout, so as to do credit in all their actions to the teaching received from God our Saviour; for

The Hymn of Christian Hope

Now has dawned the Day of the grace of God,
 The grace that brings deliverance to all mankind,
 That brings for us the discipline of renunciation
 Of impiety and earthly passions,
 The discipline of living lives of self-control,
 Of fair-dealing and of piety, in this present world.
 So will we wait expectant of the realisation of our blest hope,
 Expectant of the dawn-splendour of the glory of God Almighty,
 And of our Saviour, Jesus the Messiah,
 Of Him who gave Himself for our sakes to death,
 So to ransom us from all iniquity,
 And to purify us for His own, His people specially reserved,
 Full of enthusiasm for good deeds.

Let these things be your theme: exhort believers, confute opponents—always with authority. Let no one imagine that he can slight you.

III

Keep before the members of the church the duties of subordination to rulers and magistrates, of submission to authority, of being ready for all good work, of slanderous no one, of being uncontentious, unassuming, displaying perfect courtesy towards all men. We must not treat heathens as our inferiors: we ourselves were once senseless and disobedient; we went astray in thralldom to passions and pleasures of all kinds; we passed our lives in malice and jealousy, detested by our fellow-men, hating one another. But

Hymn of Salvation by Grace

When dawned on us the grace, the love for humankind
Of God our Saviour,
Then—not for works that in righteousness we wrought,
But following the promptings of His own compassion—
He saved us, through the baptismal laver of the New Birth,
And through the renewal wrought by the Holy Spirit
Which He poured forth on us plenteously,
Through Jesus the Messiah, our Saviour,
That we, made righteous by God's free grace,
Might, by hope uplifted, become heirs of life eternal.

Most true are those lines: and on these essentials I want you to insist, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good actions. Such teaching is noble, is helpful to our fellow-men. But with all silly speculations, celestial genealogies, squabbings, and wranglings on minutiae of Mosaic Law, have nothing to do. They are unhelpful, and, in fact, valueless. A sectary, after a first and second caution, exclude from the church. You know that such a man has utterly turned aside, and, though self-convicted, goes on sinning.

When I send Artemas to you—or, it may be, Tychicus—try, do try to meet me at Nicopolis; for there I have made up my mind to pass the winter.

When you see off on their journey Zenas, the student of law, and Apollos, do your utmost to let them want for nothing.

Let our people, like the members of other churches, learn to devote themselves to honest work, to the supply of the necessities of their teachers, so that they may not be living unfruitful lives.

All friends here with me send greetings to you.

Greet from me those who, as one with us in faith, love us.

God's grace be with you all.

THE SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHEUS

[WRITTEN DURING THE SECOND IMPRISONMENT,
ABOUT 68 A.D.]

PAUL was in prison again awaiting his trial. He was now subjected to more rigorous confinement, 'like a malefactor.' His case had already come on for a first hearing. On appearing before the court, over which it is possible that Nero was presiding in person, he found himself absolutely friendless. No one stood forth to act as his advocate, to advise him as to legal forms, to cross-question the witnesses, none to speak to his character. The last persecution had struck such terror into those who survived it, that no one whose presence could have been of use to him dared to appear for him. The evidence, however, was not deemed sufficient to condemn him without further inquiry, and he was remanded. His own language shows that he recognised (the votes of the judges may have been nearly equal) that he had had a very narrow escape; and it is evident that he did not expect that he would be allowed a long respite from death. He was, indeed, martyred (by beheading, according to tradition) soon after this letter was written.

Timotheus was now at Ephesus, bearing his heavy burden of responsibility; his difficulties were increased by the activity of false teachers. Paul seems to have instinctively felt that his friend, in his grief, depression, and self-distrust, needed all the encouragement, all the advice that he could give him. He foresaw that Timotheus would henceforth have to stand alone. His one hope was to see him once more before he died. His asking for the cloak is a significant touch. He was in a fireless cell; and it can be bitterly cold in Rome in the winter.

THE LETTER

I

Paul, an apostle of Messiah Jesus, so appointed through God's will—an apostle to proclaim the promise of life, the life that is centred in Messiah Jesus—

to Timotheus, my dear, dear son—

Grace, mercy, and heart-peace descend on you from God the Father, and from Messiah Jesus our Lord.

Thankful am I to God—whom I serve with a stainless conscience, with devotion inherited from my forefathers—to feel how unceasing is the remembrance that I keep of you in my prayers night and day. I long to see you—I remember how you wept at our last parting—that I may be filled with joy. For I am calling up memories of the unfeigned faith that dwells in you, which had its home first in the heart of your grandmother Lois, and of your mother Eunice, as it now has in yours; of that I am confident. And for this very reason do I now remind you to kindle into a brighter flame the gracious gift of God, which, communicated through the laying-on of my hands, now abides in you.

From a Hymn of the New Life

No spirit of craven fear
Hath God bestowed on us,
But of might and of love,
And of self-discipline.

Never blush, then, for the witness you bear of our Lord; nor blush for me, who for his sake lie in prison. But bear your share in my hardships for the Glad-tidings' sake, with a steadfastness worthy of the power God has put forth:

Hymn of the Gracious Call

He has delivered us;
He has called us with a hallowing call;

Not for any deserts of ours,
But in furtherance of His own purpose,
And the grace which, in the person of Messiah Jesus,
Was given us ere the eternal ages began,
But has now been revealed
Through the appearing of our Saviour, Jesus the Messiah,
When He brought death to nothingness,
And made a new day dawn, a day of life,
Of life imperishable,
Through the Glad-tidings—

For the proclaiming whereof I was appointed herald, apostle, and teacher. Ay, and even for that reason am I enduring these sufferings; yet am I not ashamed. For I know in whom I have put my trust, and sure am I that He is strong to ward the treasure I have laid up in His keeping, to ward it even till that Great Day. Adhere to the broad lines of the wholesome teaching that you heard from me, in accordance with the faith and love that lean on Messiah Jesus. Guard your glorious trust by the help of the Holy Spirit who makes His home in us.

I have reason to appeal to your loyalty: you know this, that all the brethren in Asia have turned their backs on me, Phygelus and Hermogenes among them. May the Lord vouchsafe mercy to the household of Onesiphorus; for he often cheered my spirit. *He* was not ashamed to own a chained prisoner for his friend! Nay more, when he came to Rome, he took special pains to seek me out, and he found me. May our Lord vouchsafe to him to find mercy from God in that Great Day! And all the good offices he performed in Ephesus you know better than I can tell you.

II

Do you then, my child, my own child, find soul-strengthening in the grace of which Messiah Jesus is the one source. The truths which, as many who were present can bear testimony,

you heard from me, commit these to trustworthy men, such as shall be competent in their turn to teach others. Share the hardships of my campaign, like a gallant soldier of Messiah Jesus. No soldier, when on service, trammels himself with life's business engagements: his one aim is to give satisfaction to his superior officer. And though it be but an athletic contest in which a man takes part, no wreath of victory is set on his head, unless he conforms to the rules of the competition. Again, it is only the husbandman who toils hard that has the first claim to a share of the harvest. Do not miss the application of what I say: I am sure you will not, for the Lord will give you discernment in all matters. Keep ever before you Jesus the Messiah—think of Him as Him who was raised from the dead; think of Him as the prophetically indicated King of the seed of David—as I proclaimed when I brought the Glad-tidings. Ay, and for publishing it I am now maltreated, am actually in chains, like a malefactor—but God's message is pent in no prison! Because I know this, I bear up against all sufferings for the sake of God's chosen ones, in order that they too may win the salvation which is ours through our life in Messiah Jesus, and, with it, eternal glory. Full of truth are the words of your hymn:

Hymn of Steadfast Endurance

If we have shared His death, we shall share His life too:
If we steadfastly bear up, we shall also share His kingdom:
If we renounce Him, He too will renounce us.
Though we be faithless, He remains faithful:
He cannot renounce Himself.

Keep reminding your people of these things. Solemnly charge them, as in the presence of the Lord, to hold aloof from verbal polemics: they serve no good purpose, and only unsettle those who listen to them. Be in earnest to set yourself in God's presence tested by trial, a labourer who needs not to blush for his work, but who drives the ploughshare of truth in

a straight furrow. But from the irreverent, empty talk of the false teachers do you stand aloof. They will go to more and more daring lengths in impiety: their teaching, like a deadly gangrene, will eat deeper and deeper. Hymenaeus and Philetus are cases in point, men who, in dealing with the truth, have shot wide of the mark. They assert that all the resurrection there is to be has already taken place. There are believers whose faith they are actually subverting now. Yet still the Church's steadfast foundation laid by God stands unshaken: these are the words graven on the corner-stone that seals her for His,

‘ THE LORD KNOWETH HIS OWN ’;

and again,

‘ LET EVERY ONE WHO TAKETH FOR HIS WATCHWORD
THE NAME OF THE LORD
STAND CLEAR OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS. ’

Still, holy as the church fundamentally is, she is like a great mansion in which there are vessels not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and earthenware, some for noble, others for ignoble use. If, then, a man cleanse himself from these pollutions of false teaching, he will be a vessel for noble use, hallowed, well-fitted for the service of his Master, ready prepared for all good work. For yourself, flee from the passions which are the besetment of youth; but pursue after righteousness, faith, love, and peace, in company with all who from a pure heart call upon the Lord. With foolish and superficial speculations have nothing to do, since you know they do but beget contentions. Now a bondman of the Lord ought not to be contentious, but to be courteous to all, ready to teach, forbearing. He ought gently to instruct those who oppose him, in the hope that God may some day grant them a better frame of mind, which may lead to recognition of the truth, and that

so from their drunken slumber amid the toils of the devil, where, trapped by him, they have lain, they may start up, to do the will of God.

III

But (in spite of all that you can do) of this be sure, that, in the days immediately preceding the Appearing of the Lord, there will come upon the world terrible times. The mass of men will be selfish, avaricious, braggarts, arrogant, slanderous, disobedient to parents, ingrates, impious, without natural affection, implacable, calumniators, unreigned in passion, savage, haters of the good, traitorous, reckless, besotted with pride, lovers of pleasure instead of being lovers of God. They will wear the mask of religion, while they have denied it all influence on their character. Ah, turn away from these! Of this class are those who are now worming themselves into families, are haling after them a captive train of frivolous women, conscience-burdened with their sins, adrift on the current of ever-varying morbid cravings—creatures ever ready to imbibe new teachings, yet impotent to attain to any perception of the truth. Just as Jannes and Jambres¹ opposed Moses, so do these men also oppose the truth. Their minds are rotten to the core: in matters of the Faith the test has proved their worthlessness. However, they have reached the end of their tether: their insane wickedness shall be bared before all men, as was that of those impostors of old.

But *you*—you have been familiar with my teaching, my conduct, my life-purpose, my faith, my forbearance, my love, my steadfast endurance, my persecutions, my sufferings, sharp as those which befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra: you have known what bitter persecutions I have endured—and yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Ay, and all who are resolved to live a God-fearing life in union with Messiah Jesus, will be persecuted. But knaves and impostors will but

¹ Traditional names of the chief of Pharaoh's magicians, said to be sons of Balaam.

make progress on the path to ruin, leading others astray, and going astray themselves. But you—abide by the lessons you have learnt: hold to your convictions. You know from what teachers you learnt them first; you know that from infancy you have been familiar with the Sacred Records, which can give you the wisdom which, vitalised by the faith that rests on Messiah Jesus, leads to salvation. Every written record inspired by God is also helpful for teaching truth, for refuting error, for restoration of the lapsed, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thorough, may be perfectly equipped for all good work.

IV

I solemnly charge you, as in the presence of God, and of Messiah Jesus, who shall hereafter judge those who are alive at His Coming, and the dead; I charge you by His Appearing, by His Kingdom—proclaim His Message! Be ready for action, whether the opportunity seems favourable or unfavourable. Convict your hearers of their errors; rebuke them, plead with them. With tireless patience adapt your teaching to every capacity. I thus caution you, because there will surely come a time when they will be restive under wholesome teaching. They will gather round them a rabble of teachers adapted to their own cravings, to that itch of novelty with which their ears are diseased. And so they will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to mere fables. But *you*—in all things do you remain calm and sane; endure suffering; perform the work of a herald of the Glad-tidings: fully discharge your function as God's steward.

As for me, I think my work is done. I am as wine just about to be spilt on the altar—as a ship at point to put out to sea. I am a wrestler who has striven through a gallant struggle, a runner who has finished his race, a soldier who has kept his oath of loyal obedience. Henceforth there is laid up in store for me the victor's wreath of righteousness, which the Lord will award me in the Great Day, the Lord the Righteous Judge—

and not to me alone, but to all who with yearning love have watched for His Appearing.

Do try hard to come to me—come soon! I am very lonely; for Demas has deserted me—he clung to this present world—and has departed for Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia; Titus to Dalmatia. Luke is here with me—none besides. Take Marcus as your travelling companion, and bring him with you. I have found his services very helpful. Tychicus I have had to send, as the bearer of this, to Ephesus. I left a cloak at Troas, in Carpus' house: when you come, bring it with you; my books also—but, above all, the parchment-rolls.

Alexander the brass-founder displayed bitter hostility to me: the Lord will requite him as his deeds deserve. Do you also beware of him, for he was a fierce opponent of the Message I bore.

When I was first brought up for trial, no one appeared as my advocate: all deserted me. May God not record it against them! But the Lord stood at my side, and made my heart strong; for He meant that through me His proclamation should be fully published, and that all the Gentiles should hear it. Ay, and I was rescued out of the very jaws of the lion. Still will my Lord deliver me from every evil agency, and will bring me safe into His Kingdom—His Kingdom in the heavens. Unto Him be glory through the ages of ages, Amen!

Greet from me Prisca and Aquila, and the family of Onesiphorus. Erastus, when I left for Rome, stayed on at Corinth. Trophimus I had to leave at Miletus, as he was sick.

Do try hard to come before winter!

Eubulus sends his greeting to you, as do Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren.

May the Lord be with your spirit!

God's grace be with you and yours.

THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS

WHOEVER wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, it is as certain as anything can, by comparative criticism, be proved to be, that it was not written by St. Paul. Among the early Fathers there was great uncertainty as to its authorship: Origen (186–254 A.D.) wrote ‘God only knows who really was the writer of it.’ It was not till four hundred years after its appearance that the practice arose in the Church of assigning it to St. Paul. The Biblical scholars of the Reformation—as Erasmus, Melancthon, Calvin, Luther—refused to regard him as its author; and modern criticism is almost unanimous in justifying, and in greatly strengthening, their objections.

The Greek is not the Greek of St. Paul: it is far better—the Greek of a man who had always moved in cultured Greek circles. The style is wholly different. ‘The writer,’ as Farrar puts it, ‘cites differently from St. Paul; he writes differently; he argues differently; he thinks differently; he declaims differently, he constructs and connects his sentences differently; he builds up his paragraphs on a wholly different model.’ Moreover, the personal attitude of the writer was one impossible for St. Paul. Hebrews 2: 3, could not, as Luther long ago pointed out, have been written by the man who wrote Galatians 1: 1 and 12—nor, indeed, by any apostle. Again, while St. Paul never omits to insist on the part of the Gentiles in Christ, even to the extent of having temporarily taken the place of the self-rejected Jews, this writer never so much as mentions them: it might seem as if he recognised, as if he had heard of, none but Hebrew Christians. Once more, a reader who comes from the perusal of Galatians and Romans to Hebrews finds himself in a new atmosphere. He meets a new conception of the relation

between the Old Covenant and the New, of the Jewish Law and ritual, of the person and office of Christ, of His redemptive work, of the meaning of Faith and of Righteousness. If we want to find the true germ of the Epistle, the text on which it is a sermon, we shall find it, not in the writings of St. Paul, but in the opening words of one of our Lord's last discourses—'*Ought* not Christ to have *suffered* these things, and to *enter into his glory*?' These three expressions, 'ought,' 'suffered,' 'enter into his glory,' are the key-notes of this Epistle; and its method follows that described in the words that follow—'Beginning at Moses and all the Prophets.' That great discourse of the Lord, that revelation of the inner significance of His sacrifice and its effects, must have been remembered and treasured by those who heard it. It must have been one of the most precious oral traditions of the primitive church. If there is preserved anywhere a record of it, is it not here?

The persons to whom this Epistle was in the first instance addressed were probably the Christian Jews in Palestine, perhaps in Jerusalem itself, upon whom strong pressure was constantly being put in order to make them renounce their faith, and return to the synagogue. The Epistle furnishes internal evidence that some had apostatised already, and that many were wavering. It was most likely written about the year 66 A.D., just before the outbreak of the war which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem. Of the author nothing can certainly be known. He must have been an eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures, whose special gift lay in trenchantly confuting Jewish opponents, and in showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. Moreover, he may well have been an Alexandrian, for the Epistle is full of striking resemblances, both in language and in thought, to the writings of the great religious philosopher of Alexandria, Philo the Jew, who had shortly before written to prove that all that was best in Greek philosophy was derived from the Old Testament Scriptures. In view of these facts, the intuition of Luther first fixed upon Apollos as the author (*see Acts 18: 24-28*); and, though other

names—as Luke, Barnabas, Silas—have found advocates, it is to this view that our chief Biblical scholars incline.¹

THE LETTER

I

By various partial revelations, under various forms of appeal, did God in past ages speak to our fathers in the persons of His prophets. But now, as the age in which we live draws to its close, He has spoken to us in the person of His Son. He has Him the heir who takes for His inheritance the universe. Nay more, it was through His agency that God created all cosmic systems. He is to God as the rays are which reveal to us all we know of the sun: He is the Image that bodies out for us the essential being of God. It is He who bears on to its goal all God's universe through the Word which is the conducting medium of God's power. He achieved the cleansing of a world's sin, and then sat down on a throne at the right hand of the Majesty Divine in the high heavens. He attained a rank as much superior to the angels as the name, 'THE SON OF GOD,' which He has inherited by right of birth, far transcended theirs, 'The Messengers of God.' To which of the angels did God ever say, 'MY OWN SON ART THOU, THIS DAY HAVE I BEGOTTEN THEE' ?—(*Psalm* 2: 7), and again, 'I WILL BE TO HIM FATHER, AND HE SHALL BE TO ME SON' ?—(*Second Samuel* 7: 14). Yea, and God makes proclamation, that, what time He shall again² bring His First-born Son into His world, 'ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD SHALL DO REVERENCE TO HIM.'—(*Psalm* 97: 7). Nay more, with reference to angels He says, 'GOD, WHO TRANSFORMS HIS ANGELS INTO WINDS, HIS SERVANTS INTO LIGHTNING-FLAME.'—(*Psalm* 104: 4). But in reference to the

¹ For a full and popular presentment of the case for Apollos' authorship, the reader may consult Farrar's *Early Days of Christianity*, Vol. i, Book iii. The claims of Barnabas have been urged by Conybeare and Howson.

² At the Second Advent, as in *Second Thessalonians* 1: 7.

immutable Son He says, 'THE THRONE OF THEE, WHO ART GOD, IS FOR AGES ON AGES, A SCEPTRE OF UNSWERVING RECTITUDE IS THE SCEPTRE OF THY SOVEREIGNTY. THOU DIDST LOVE RIGHTEOUSNESS, THOU DIDST HATE LAWLESSNESS: FOR THIS CAUSE DID GOD, THINE OWN GODHEAD, ANOINT THEE WITH THE OIL OF TRIUMPHANT JOY, BEYOND THOSE BEINGS WHO SHARE THINE HOME.'—(*Psalm* 45: 6, 7). Again, 'IT WAS THOU WHO, IN THE BEGINNING OF TIME, LORD, DIDST LAY EARTH'S FOUNDATIONS; YEA, THE HEAVENS ARE CREATIONS OF THINE HANDS: THEY SHALL BE DESTROYED, BUT THOU ABIDEST UNCHANGING; YEA, AS A VESTURE SHALL THEY BE ALL OUTWORN: THEY ARE BUT THY VEIL, WHICH THOU SHALT ROLL UP, AND THEY SHALL BE REPLACED BY ANOTHER. BUT THOU—THOU ART EVER THE SAME, AND THY YEARS SHALL NEVER RUN OUT.'—(*Psalm* 102: 25, 27). As of His immutability, so of His dignity:—to which of the angels did God ever say, 'BE SEATED THOU AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I SHALL HAVE PLACED THY FOES, AS A FOOTSTOOL, BENEATH THY FEET?'—(*Psalm* 110: 1). The angels! what are they all but servants, spirits who render service to God, who are hour by hour being despatched on errands of ministration for the help of us who are destined to have salvation as our heritage?

II

Since, then, ours is so high a destiny, we must—we *must*—pay fuller attention than ever to the truths that we have already heard, and never drift anchorless away from them. For if the Law, which was communicated to Moses by no higher agency than that of angels, yet proved uncompromisingly inviolable, if every sin of commission, every sin of omission received for its wage a requital, and that a just one, what plea for evasion of its penalties shall we find, if we disregard the one great deliverance provided—that salvation which was for the first time proclaimed by our Lord? Those who heard it from His lips passed it on to us, and confirmed its reality by their own experience: God has added the sanction of His testimony by signs and marvels, by manifold manifestations of His power,

and by apportioning the gifts of His Holy Spirit to various believers, according to His own will. Yes, though the Law was communicated through angels, not so was the Gospel. For it is not to angels that God has subjected the New Humanity of the future, which is the theme of my argument. Witness was borne to this in that prophetic passage, 'WHAT IS MAN, THAT THOU DOST REMEMBER HIM?—WHAT IS THE SON OF MAN, THAT THOU DOST STOOP TO HIM? THOU DIDST MAKE HIM BUT LITTLE INFERIOR TO ANGELS, WITH GLORY AND HONOUR DIDST THOU CROWN HIM, AND DIDST APPOINT HIM RULER OVER THE WORKS OF THINE HANDS: ALL THINGS DIDST THOU SET BENEATH HIS FEET.'—(*Psalm* 8: 4, 6). Now the expression, 'Set all things beneath him' must mean that God exempted nothing from this destiny of subjection to Him. But, as a matter of fact, we do not as yet see all things subjected to man. But we do see the archetype of the New Humanity, Jesus—Him who has been lowered to the level of humanity, and so made a little inferior to angels—already, because of His suffering of the death-penalty of our sin, crowned with glory and honour. This has been done, that his tasting of death might, by God's grace to us, prove to have been for the sake of all humanity. For it was an act worthy of God, for whose ends all things exist, and by whose power are all upheld, to draw onward to the glory of His presence these myriads, all His sons, and so to make the Captain who leads their march salvation-ward perfect through those very sufferings that He endured for them. He could not be truly perfect without them: for He who is consecrating us, and we who are consecrated by Him, are all parts of one Body. And this is why He thinks not scorn to call men His brothers. He says, 'I WILL HERALD FORTH THY NAME AMONG MY BRETHREN; IN THE MIDST OF THY CHURCH WILL I SING THY PRAISES.'—(*Psalm* 22: 22). And again, to show how sure He was that God would fulfil this His intention, 'I WILL BE FIXED IN TRUST IN HIM.'—(*Psalm* 18: 2). Again, He is still referring to this His perfecting when He says, 'HERE AM I—I AND THE CHILDREN OF GOD WHOM HE HAS GIVEN TO ME.'—(*Isaiah* 8: 18). Since,

then, these human children of God are sharers in human flesh and blood, He too took a closely corresponding share in the same characteristics of humanity. He did this, that he might be able to die, and by His death might annihilate the power of him who sways the sceptre of death's terrors—that is, the devil—and so might transfer into a new existence those who through the haunting dread of death were all their lifetime bowed beneath a yoke of veritable slavery. No indeed, it is not to angels that our Lord reaches a helping hand, but to 'the seed of Abraham' He does reach a helping hand. It follows that He was morally bound to assume a nature similar in all respects to that of His human brothers, in order that He might become a sympathetic High-priest, one in whom men can trust, in all their relations to God, so as to make atonement to God for the sins of us His people. Nay more, He can keep us from falling into sin: He in His humanity suffered through temptation, and so can succour humanity in its daily temptations.

III

Therefore, brothers consecrated to God, you who have a part in the Call that came from Heaven, fix your attention on Him who is at once the Apostle and the High-priest of the faith that we acknowledge, even Jesus. He has been faithful to God who appointed Him as the inaugurator of the New Dispensation, just as Moses, the inaugurator of the old, was faithful in all his administration of the ancient church, which was then God's House. You are now to fix your attention on Him, because He is a far more glorious figure than Moses. How so?—because the fashioner of a building is a higher order of being than the building itself. Again, every building must be fashioned by some one, but the great fashioner of all things is God. Now Moses, it is true, was faithful in all the administration of God's House; but it was with the faithfulness of a servant, a mere *locum tenens*; and herein he proves a witness to the truth of the proclamation of a New Dispensation. For now the real Master has come, Messiah; and He is to rule God's House as God's

Son. And it is we, the Christians, who are now His House—that is, if we do not relinquish our fearlessly outspoken claim, our exultant claim, based as it is on the hope that inspires us, if we hold it fast unwaveringly on to the end.

Therefore¹ do you who still waver between the Old Covenant and the New, mark how the utterance of the Holy Spirit calls on you for instant decision:—‘TO-DAY IF YE SHALL HEAR HIS VOICE, CONTINUE NOT TO HARDEN YOUR HEARTS, AS HAPPENED IN THAT PROVOCATION OF GOD, IN THE DAY WHEN ISRAEL TRIED HIS PATIENCE IN THE WILDERNESS; WHEN YOUR FATHERS TRIED MY PATIENCE, TESTED MY FORBEARANCE, THOUGH THEY ACTUALLY SAW MY WORKS, FOR FORTY YEARS.² THEREFORE I BROKE OUT INTO INDIGNATION AGAINST THIS RACE, AND I SAID, “ALL THROUGH THEIR HISTORY ARE THEY GOING ASTRAY—NOT IN HEAD, BUT IN HEART! IT IS THEY—NOT THE HEATHEN—THAT HAVE NOT KNOWN MY WAYS.” THUS I SAID, WHEN I SWORE IN MY ANGER, “THEY SHALL NOT ENTER INTO THE HAVEN OF REST THAT I HAVE PROVIDED!”’—(*Psalm* 95: 7, 11). Look to it, O my brothers, look to it, lest there prove to be in any one of you—not honest doubt, but—a heart whose wickedness takes shape in unbelief, and betrays itself by conduct which is simply an act of revolt from Him who is a Living God! Nay, but let not a day pass without pleading with one another, ere the opportunity, limited by that word ‘To-day,’ passes from you, lest, through self-delusion begotten of your sinful attitude, any of you be hardened into settled obduracy. Think what a glorious opportunity is presented to you. We, who have accepted it, have now become sharers in the personality of Messiah, and shall continue to be so, if we do but hold fast this new-born assurance, hold it unshaken to the end. While, then, He is saying, ‘TODAY, IF YE SHALL HEAR HIS VOICE’—do not continue to harden your hearts, as your fathers did in the

¹From here to IV: 13, may be taken as a digression, an appeal to the Judaising party.

² It has been noted as significant that forty years also elapsed between the Crucifixion and the destruction of Jerusalem.

day of the provocation of God. Do not dream that you are safeguarded by your birthright as 'Sons of Abraham.' Why, who were they who, though they had heard His command, yet provoked God? Who, but *all* those sons of Abraham who, led by Moses, had marched out of Egypt? And with whom was God indignant through those forty years? Was it not with the same people, whose unfaith had passed into sin?—those whose dead limbs were left strewn in the wilderness? And to whom did God swear that they should not enter into His haven of rest, if not to those whose sin had culminated in rebellion? It must be plain to us that it was through their unfaith that they, so far from having the vested right of which you dream, were precluded from even entering in.

IV

Let us then, instead of reposing on fancied privileges, be filled with dread lest, though God's offer of entering into His Rest is still left open, any of you should even fall under suspicion of being laggards. For to us have the Glad-tidings of God been proclaimed, as truly as the glad-tidings of deliverance from bondage were proclaimed to Israel of old: are you going to repeat their error? The word of God which they heard availed them nothing, because it was not by faith made part of the inward life of those who heard it. We who have believed have not followed their example; for we really are now treading the path that leads to that Rest of God to which He referred in those words, 'WHEN I SWORE IN MY WRATH, "NOT THEY SHALL ENTER INTO MY HAVEN OF REST."' And yet that Rest was prepared, was waiting for them. The creative work of God had ended, and so His Rest had begun, with the foundation of the world; for there is a passage in which the sacred writer speaks of the seventh day thus: 'AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS.'—(*Genesis* 2: 2). But they forfeited their part in it, as is recorded in this second utterance, 'THEY SHALL NOT ENTER INTO MY REST.'

Since, then, an opportunity is still left open for some to enter

into this Rest, whereas those who first heard God's glad-tidings were precluded by their rebellion from entering in, we find that God limits His renewed offer to a certain day: 'TO-DAY' (after that vast interval)—making David His mouthpiece—'TO-DAY, IF YE SHALL HEAR HIS VOICE, CONTINUE NOT TO HARDEN YOUR HEARTS.' What, then, is this Rest of God? It cannot mean the Promised Land. For, if Joshua's settlement of Israel there had fulfilled the ideal of Rest, God would not after that be found speaking of another 'day'—another opportunity of attaining His unattained Rest. It follows that there yet remains to be attained by God's people a participation in God's Sabbath-rest. For whoever has entered into God's Rest, he too has attained rest from his labours, even as God rested from His own. Let us, then, earnestly strive to enter into that Rest of God, lest any of us should, through following the example of the disobedience of ancient Israel, miss this second opportunity. For God's word, on which I base my argument, is not a thing of the past nor something external to us: it is still living; it is instinct with energy; it is keener than any two-edged sword: that can but pierce flesh, but this finds its way to the dividing line between the animal life and the immortal spirit: it pierces the deepest recesses of our nature; it analyses the very emotions and purposes of the inmost heart. Yes, there is no created being that can escape His notice; but all things lie bare and defenceless before the eyes of Him with whom we have to reckon.

To resume my argument with my fellow-believers:—since, as I said before, we have a great High-priest, who has already ascended through the skies, Jesus the Son of God, let us cling to the faith that we profess. Our weaknesses, our errors, need not discourage us; for we have not such a High-priest as is incapable of sympathising with our frailties, but one who has been assaulted by temptations in all respects consonant with the likeness of His nature to ours, yet without falling into sin. Let us, then, approach God's throne of grace with a fearlessly-outspoken plea, that we may gain God's mercy, and find

His grace bestowed for our help just when it can best avail us.

V

This aspect of Jesus proves that we have advanced from the Old Dispensation to one differing from it not in essentials, but simply in perfection. For every earthly high-priest is, being from time to time selected from among his human brethren, appointed as men's representative—generally, in their relations to God, and specifically, with a view to his offering gifts and sacrifices to atone for their sins. Such a man is able to make allowances for those who sin, through ignorance on the one hand, through mistaken motives on the other, since he too lives in an environment of personal frailty. Nay, more, on account of this personal frailty, it devolves upon him to offer sacrifice for sins, not only on behalf of the people, but also on his own behalf. Again, no one takes upon himself the dignity of priesthood: but only as summoned thereto by God does he assume it, as was the case with the first bearer of the office, Aaron. In like manner even the Messiah did not confer upon Himself the glory of being instituted a High-priest: that glory was conferred by Him who said to Him, 'MY SON ART THOU; I HAVE THIS DAY BEGOTTEN THEE.'—(*Psalms* 2: 7). So also in another passage we find God saying, 'THOU ART A PRIEST APPOINTED FOR ALL TIME, AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.'—(*Psalms* 110: 4). And, to show that Jesus can sympathise with our frailty, need I remind you how He, in the days of His humanity, offered up petitions and imploring supplications to God, who was able to rescue Him out of the grasp of death—offered them with agonised cries and tears? And His prayers were heard because of the reverential submission which He displayed. True, He was the Son of God; yet He had a lesson of obedience to learn, and He learnt it by the sufferings to which He submitted. So was He perfected, and so became for all who now render obedience to Him the Fountain-head of eternal salvation—even He who was named by God a High-priest after the order of Melchizedek.

With respect to the correspondence between these two I have now to enter on a full discussion; but, I warn you, it is difficult to put it lucidly to you, for your intelligence has, instead of being quickened, become dulled. You have been believers long enough to have qualified yourselves to be instructors; but, on the contrary, you actually need some one to instruct you in the mere rudiments of the revelations of God: you have, to use a figure, so degenerated as to need a milk-diet instead of the solid food which should be suitable for you. I use the term 'milk-diet' as indicating the stage of inexperience in the doctrines of righteousness, the stage of spiritual infancy. I use the term 'solid food' as indicating the stage of spiritual maturity, of those who, through use of their opportunities, now have their perceptions trained to distinguish for themselves between good and evil.

VI

Therefore do let us get past the elementary stage of Christian doctrine, and press on to matured knowledge. Let us not be for ever laying and re-laying the foundations, harping on the necessity for that change in life's purpose which leads us to the abandonment of the observances of the Mosaic Law, which have no life in them, on the necessity for the faith that looks up to God, on the necessity for baptism as a sign of the acceptance of our teaching, on the efficacy of the rite of laying-on of hands, on the certainty of the resurrection of the dead, and of judgment eternal. And to this advanced teaching I now mean to proceed, if God permit me. For it is a task beyond human powers, when men have once had their souls flooded with the Light, when they have feasted on the bounty sent from Heaven, when they have become sharers in the gift of the Holy Spirit, when they have feasted on the glorious Word of God, and have been thrilled with the supernatural powers of the New Life that is about to dawn, and yet have revolted from their allegiance—it is a task beyond human powers to go on indefinitely rekindling in them the new life-purpose, so long as

they go on re-crucifying, in His relation to them, the Son of God, and continue to bring public opprobrium on His Name. To take an analogy from nature;—the soil that has drunk in the rain which has again and again descended on it, and that bears produce adapted to the wants of those for whose sake it is tilled, is receiving its share of blessing from God. But if it persistently sends up crops of thorns and briers, it is pronounced worthless by man, and is near being cursed by God. The poisonous elements in it can only be eradicated, in the last resort, by burning.

But, my dear friends, though I do use language of such stern warning, I feel sure that your condition is far better than this, that it is very near salvation. In spite of the shortcomings of your spiritual experience, God is not unjust, He will not forget your practical Christianity, the love which you have displayed for His name, nor how you have rendered service to His consecrated ones, and are rendering service still. But I do long for this, that each of you may display the same earnestness for the full attainment of all you have a right to hope for till you reach the goal, as you do display in practical religion. So you will not be spiritual dullards, but will follow the examples of those who, through their faith and tireless perseverance, are inheriting the blessings promised them. Take the first who received such a promise—Abraham. When God gave him that promise, since there was no greater being by whom He could swear, He swore by Himself, saying, 'VERILY, WITH BLESSING WILL I BLESS THEE, AND WITH MULTIPLYING WILL I MULTIPLY THEE.'—(*Genesis* 22: 17). And so Abraham by his tireless perseverance won the fulfilment of that promise. I refer to God's oath, because our fellow-men are wont to swear by the name of some being greater than themselves; and an oath as a confirmation of a promise is conclusive against all objections to accepting it. Under these circumstances, God, being determined to make more absolutely clear to the inheritors of that promise the immutability of His purpose, made His oath the mediator, as it were, between Himself and

man. He did so, in order that through two unchangeable things—His promise and His oath—in which it was impossible for God to break faith, *we* might have all-prevailing encouragement—we, who have fled for refuge to grasp the hope that lay full in our view. This hope we now possess: it is an anchor on which our soul rides safely: it cannot slip, it cannot break: yea, it penetrates into the Unseen which lies beyond the Veil, into which our Forerunner has already entered as our representative, Jesus—He who has become for ever our High-priest—a Priest after the order of Melchizedek.

VII

Now why do I insist on His resemblance to Melchizedek? I will explain. This Melchizedek, King of Salem, was 'Priest of God Most High'—I mean, of course, him who went out to meet Abraham on his return from the slaughter of the kings, and who gave him his blessing, and to whom Abraham allotted a tenth part of all the spoil. Now, in the first place, note his very name: it means 'King of Righteousness.' Note his title: it is 'King of Salem,' which means 'King of Peace.' Once more, how mysteriously he flashes on the scene: there is no mention of his father, none of his mother, no record of his line of descent, none of the date of his birth nor of the end of his life. He bears a startling resemblance to the *Son of God!*—this man who stands for ever in history as 'a Priest.' Again, consider the greatness of this mysterious personage. So great was he, that Abraham, the patriarch, gave him no less than a tenth part of the spoils of war. Now, those of the family of Levi, on being invested with the priesthood, can plead a positive command to tithe the nation, as the Law directs, that is, to tithe their own brethren, those who have sprung from the loins of Abraham no less than they. Here, however, is one who, though not drawing his descent from their tribe, yet took tithe of Abraham, and who gave his blessing to one who was, if ever man was, independent of it, since he already possessed God's promises. Now, beyond all dispute, of two persons, it is

the inferior who receives the blessing of the superior. And here, the men who receive tithes are successively removed by death; but there the receiver was one who is declared, on God's testimony, to be 'living.' And, in a manner of speaking, even Levi, who now receives the tithes, paid them through Abraham; for he was still in the loins of his forefather Abraham when Melchizedek met the latter.

Now, then—if mature spiritual development were attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for this was the basis on which the nation received the Mosaic Law), what further necessity was there that a different priest should appear, 'after the order of Melchizedek,' and that he should not be named as 'after the order of Aaron?' The fact, as indicating the substitution of another line as holders of the priesthood, must inevitably imply the substitution of another dispensation for the Law which was based on that priesthood. For the Personage of whom that declaration of God is made belongs to a quite different tribe, no member of which has ever officiated at the altar. For it is notorious that our Lord sprang from the tribe of Judah; and there is no recorded expression of Moses connecting this tribe with the priestly office. Nay, there is yet more abundant evidence of a religious revolution, if it be a fact that a different Priest was to appear, a reproduction of Melchizedek, a Priest who holds His office not by virtue of a clause in an ordinance subject to the limitations of flesh and blood, but by virtue of the power of a life not subject to dissolution. And it is a fact: for God's testimony declares, 'A PRIEST ART THOU FOR ALL TIME, AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.' There is here, it is plain, an abrogation of the pre-existing institution, because it had proved an instrument too weak to effect its purpose, unavailing for human needs—for in no respect did the Law produce spiritual maturity;—and there is the inauguration of a sublimer hope, a channel through which we can now come close to God. And, in proportion to the higher authority of an appointment confirmed by God's oath, (the appointment of priests, you know, has not the sanction

of an oath, whereas His appointment was confirmed by the Oath of God, who said in reference to Him, 'THE LORD HATH SWORN, AND WILL NOT CHANGE HIS PURPOSE, "THOU ART A PRIEST FOR EVER, AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK"'—in the same proportion is that a sublimer Covenant of which Jesus has become the guarantor. Again, there has been a long succession of individuals of the ancient priesthood, because each has been precluded by death from a perpetual tenure of the office. But because He abides alive for ever, none other can trespass on the priesthood which He holds. And for this reason He has power to continue saving, wholly and perfectly, those who, by His mediation, are through all time drawing near to God, because He is for ever living—living to intercede for them!

Ah, it is just such a High-priest that was fitted to our needs, one holy, guileless, stainless of sin, uncontaminated by sinners—one, too, who has been upraised higher than the heavens, one who, though He intercedes daily, is not under the daily necessity, like human high-priests, who, interceding yearly, are under the yearly necessity, of first offering sacrifices to atone for his own sins, and after that for the sins of the nation: nay, this He did once for all, when He offered up Himself. He is exempted from such obligations both by the circumstances of His appointment, and by His essential nature:—the Mosaic Law appoints as high-priests mere human beings, men burdened with human frailty: He was appointed by the Oath of God, spoken *after* the institution of the Law; and He is Son of God, for ever perfected.

VIII

The crowning conclusion of my argument is this:—such a High-priest as I have described have we, even He who has taken His seat on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty Divine in the heavens. He there performs sacrificial functions for God's consecrated ones, the service of the true Tabernacle,

which was set up by the Lord, and not by man. I say 'sacrificial functions,' inasmuch as the offering of gifts and sacrifices is the essential object for which every high-priest is appointed. It follows that, unless the title be a misnomer, this High-priest of ours should also have some offering to make. Now, supposing He were on earth, He would, so far from being a high-priest, not be, in the conventional sense of the term, a priest at all, since there is already a priestly order, consisting of men who offer the gifts required in accordance with the Mosaic Law. But these render service to that which is but a representation, a mere shadowing forth of the heavenly reality. This is proved by the divine directions given to Moses: 'SEE TO IT,' said God, 'THAT THOU MAKE EVERY PART IN STRICT CORRESPONDENCE WITH THAT COPY WHICH WAS SHOWN TO THEE ON MOUNT SINAI.'—(*Exodus* 25: 40). Hence the priesthood of Jesus is not identical with these Levitical priesthoods; but, as it is, He has obtained a transcendently higher function, sublimer in proportion to the superiority of the covenant of which He is the Mediator, a covenant whose enactment was based upon sublimer promises. Were not the New a better Covenant—in other words, if the first covenant had been flawless—there would be no attempt at the institution of a second. It was not flawless, for we find God blaming its inadequacy: 'BEHOLD, THE DAYS DRAW NEAR, SAITH THE LORD, WHEN I WILL CONCLUDE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL, AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH, A NEW COVENANT, NOT ON THE LINES OF THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE FOR THEIR FATHERS, IN THAT DAY THAT I GRASPED THEM BY THE HAND, TO LEAD THEM FORTH OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT. BY THAT COVENANT OF MINE THEY DID NOT ABIDE, AND I THEREFORE WITHDREW MY FAVOUR FROM THEM, SAITH THE LORD. FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL CONCLUDE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THESE DAYS, SAITH THE LORD—I WILL NOW IMPRINT MY LAWS UPON THEIR UNDERSTANDING; NAY, UPON THEIR VERY HEARTS WILL I GRAVE THEM, AND I WILL BE TO THEM GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE TO ME MY PEOPLE. AND OF A SURETY THEY SHALL NO

MORE SCHOOL EACH MAN HIS FELLOW-CITIZEN, EACH MAN HIS BROTHER, SAYING, "ACQUAINT THYSELF WITH THE LORD"; FOR ALL SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LOWLY ONE AMONG THEM TO THE GREAT ONE AMONG THEM. FOR COMPASSIONATE WILL I BE TO THEIR WRONG-DOINGS, AND THEIR ERRORS WILL I SURELY NOT REMEMBER ANY MORE.'—(*Jeremiah* 31: 31-34). The use of the above expression, 'A New Covenant,' implies that God has made the first obsolete. Now, an institution which is growing obsolete, which is becoming age-worn, is ripe for disappearance.

IX

Now, as I said, the first covenant, provisional as it was, had its ordinances of ritual-service, and its Holy Place—but *this was entirely mundane*. For a Tabernacle was constructed, in which—that is, in the outer portion—were the Lamp, and the Table (on which were laid out the loaves): this portion is named the 'Holy Place.' And, after the second veil, was the pavilion named the 'Holy of Holies.' To this belonged the golden Altar of Incense, and the Ark of the Covenant, plated all over with gold, in which lay the golden vase containing the manna, and the rod of Aaron which budded, and the slabs inscribed with the Covenant. Above this ark brooded the Cherubim of the Glorious Presence. They overshadowed the Mercy-seat—but this is no time for going into details about these things. Well then, these preparations having been thus made, we find that into the outer pavilion the priests are continually entering, performing the ritual-services. But into the inner pavilion does the high-priest alone enter, and that on one day only in the whole year, and never without bearing with him blood, which he offers of behalf of himself and of the errors of the nation. By this restriction the Holy Spirit (which dictated it) indicates that the way into that Holiest Place is not yet thrown open, so long as the outer pavilion is a permanent institution. This outer pavilion is symbolical of the epoch connected with it, symbolizing the fact that the gifts and sacrifices which are

offered are powerless to cleanse perfectly, in respect of his conscience, the worshipper. They are but accessories to regulations about lawful meats and drinks, and the multiplicity of washings—all of them ordinances dealing with externalities, imposed on religion till the time appointed for its complete reformation.

That appointed time has come. Messiah has appeared, the High-priest of the blessed state that is yet to be realised. He has passed in through the sublimer, the more perfect Tabernacle, which was never made by human hands, which is not of this material creation. He has passed in, not by virtue of the blood of goats and calves, but of His own blood. He has passed, once for all, into the Holiest Shrine; for He has achieved an expiation, not temporarily, but eternally efficacious. I am not overstating the case: for if the mere blood of bulls and of goats, if the ashes of a heifer employed in sprinkling men ceremonially unclean, can avail to hallow them so as to render them corporeally clean—if these things can effect so much, how much more shall the blood of the Messiah, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself, an unblemished sacrifice, to God, avail to cleanse your very consciences, to deliver you from the obligation of performing works of the Law, out of which all the old life has gone, and to enable you to serve the Living God?

It is because it can thus avail that He is the Mediator between God and man who inaugurates the New Covenant. His death is the sacrifice that has been consummated, a sacrifice for the expiation of transgressions that were committed under the first covenant. And the purpose of His office is that those to whom the Call has come may receive the fulfilment of the promise of the heritage eternal. His death was necessary, because this Covenant, as conveying a heritage, is identical with a testament; and where there is a testament, the death of the testator is necessarily contemplated; for a testament can only come into force after a death—does it ever take effect while yet the testator is alive? For that reason, indeed,

not even the first covenant, or testament, was inaugurated without the shedding of blood; for, when every commandment had been rehearsed, according to the tenor of the Law, by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of the slain calves and goats, along with water and scarlet wool and a spray of hyssop, and sprinkled the book itself and all the people, with these words: 'This is the blood of the Covenant which God has ordained for me to deliver to you.' Moreover, he sprinkled the Tabernacle too, and all the vessels of temple-service in the same manner with that blood. Nay more, it might almost be said, it is in blood that everything has to be purified according to the Mosaic Law; and apart from this shedding of blood forgiveness is not secured.

It was, as I have shown, an indispensable condition that the blood of these sacrifices should be the means of purifying¹ things which were but earthly representations of the originals in the heavens. These heavenly originals, however, had to be purified¹ with sacrifices as much nobler, in comparison with these, as the heavenly temple is nobler than the earthly; for it is into no Holy Place made with human hands, a mere copy of the true Holy Place, that Messiah has entered, but into Heaven itself, now to appear on our behalf before the Face of God. And, as to His sacrifice, He is not required again and again to offer up Himself. The parallel does not here hold between Him and the high-priest who enters into the Holy Place once a year with the blood of a vicarious victim; if it did, Jesus would have had to suffer over and over again for each generation since the foundation of the world, when human sin originated. Nay, but now, at the consummation of the ages, has He once for all been manifested as the atonement that annuls men's sin through the sacrifice of Himself. And even as for men this doom is in reserve, once and once only to die, and after this comes judgment; even so Messiah, after being once and once only offered, to lift from the myriads of humanity their burden of sin, shall be seen the second time by

¹ From the contamination of sins there presented for atonement.

those who are now watching for His appearing, be seen coming, disburdened of all that sin, to consummate their salvation.

X

I referred to the Law as a 'representation' of the blessed reality yet to be realised: but, in point of fact, it is but a shadow of it, and by no means an exact representation. The priests appointed under it can never, by means of the sacrifices they offer—the same sacrifices repeated year after year—perfectly cleanse for ever those who approach their altars. Were it otherwise, would these not have ceased to be offered?—certainly, by reason of the fact that the worshippers, when once for all purified, would have had no longer any guilty consciousness of their sins. So far from this being the case, we find that in those sacrifices is involved a yearly calling to remembrance of sins. Naturally so, for it is of course impossible that blood of bulls and of goats should take sins clean away. It is because of the supersession of these by the sacrifice of His own body, that the Messiah, when on the point of entering into the world, is found saying, 'SACRIFICE AND OFFERING THOU DIDST NOT DESIRE; BUT A BODY HAST THOU MADE READY FOR ME. IN HECATOMBS AND VICTIMS SLAIN FOR SIN DIDST THOU TAKE NO PLEASURE. THEN I SAID, "BEHOLD, I AM COME—IN THE ROLL OF THY RECORD HATH THIS BEEN WRITTEN DOWN CONCERNING ME—I AM COME TO DO, O GOD, THY WILL."'—(*Psalm* 40: 6, 8). After saying at the outset, 'Sacrifices and offerings and hecatombs and victims slain for sin thou didst not desire, nor didst thou take pleasure in them'—the very things which, according to the Mosaic Law, are regularly offered—He then has gone on to say, 'Behold, I am come to do thy will.' He here abolishes the former, as a means of expiating sin; He institutes the latter. And in this accomplishment of God's will, by means of the offering of the body of Jesus the Messiah once for all, have we been consecrated to God.

Once more: every human priest takes his stand by the altar for daily service, offering the same sacrifices over and over

again—sacrifices such as can never avail to strip away the sin that wraps us round. But He, after offering for sin one sacrifice which shall for ever avail, sat down, His work accomplished, at the right hand of God, having thenceforth only to wait until His foes have been placed like a footstool, beneath His feet. For by this one offering He has for ever perfectly cleansed those who, from age to age, become His consecrated ones. Yea, and the Holy Spirit witnesses to the truth of what I assert. For, after saying, 'THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL CONCLUDE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAITH THE LORD: I WILL IMPRINT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEARTS, AND UPON THEIR UNDERSTANDINGS WILL I GRAVE THEM,' then He adds, 'AND THEIR ERRORS AND THEIR BREACHES OF THE LAW WILL I SURELY NOT REMEMBER ANY MORE.' Now that that time has come, now that there is absolute forgiveness of these sins, it follows that there must be an end of the offering of victims to atone for sin.

Since, then, my brothers, we can confidently plead our claim for access, by right of Jesus' blood, into that Holiest Place—access by the path which He has inaugurated for us, a new path, a living path through the rent veil of His flesh; and since we have a great Priest who rules God's household, let us draw near with a sincere heart, in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled with the blood which cleanses all guilt from the conscience, and having our very bodies bathed in the pure water of baptism. So let us hold fast the confession of our hope, that it may waver not. Why should it waver?—true and faithful is He on whose promise we rely. Let us withal keep watch over each other, to stimulate each other to love and to noble deeds. Let us not abandon the practice of church-gatherings, as some have fallen into the habit of doing, but use them as a means of mutual encouragement. Be all the more earnest in doing this, the nearer you perceive the Day of the Lord to be.

There is every need for such earnestness; for, if we wilfully set ourselves to sin, after having received such full knowledge of the Truth, there remains for us no longer the resource of

offering a sacrifice to expiate our sins. No, there remains a dreadful awaiting of God's judgment; there remains God's jealousy embodied in fire that is destined to devour His adversaries. Any one who has set at nought the Law of Moses is put to death without pity on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much sterner punishment, think you, shall he be held deserving who has trampled under foot the Son of God,¹ who has accounted the Blood of the Covenant, by which he was consecrated, an unhallowed thing,² who has heaped insult on the Spirit that imparts the bounty of God?³ We know who says, 'MINE IS VENGEANCE, I WILL REQUITE'; and again, 'THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE'S CAUSE.'—(*Deuteronomy* 32: 35, 36). An awful thing it is to fall into the hands of a Living God!

Nay, but be ever calling to mind the days overpast, in which, when your souls had been flooded with the Light, you bore up under a hard struggle of suffering, when, on the one hand, you were set in a pillory of revilings and afflictions, when, on the other hand, you made yourselves sharers in the lot of those who lived such a life of pain. 'Sharers,' I say; for you sympathised with those chained prisoners; and the pillaging of your own possessions you welcomed with joy; for you recognised that you still possessed your own selves—a better possession and a lasting one!

Do not, then, fling away your fearless trust, for it includes a glorious repayment for all. Yes, you have need of steadfast endurance, so that you may perform the will of God, and so receive the fulfilment of His promise. For, 'YET A LITTLE WHILE—a very little while!—AND HE THAT IS DRAWING NEAR WILL HAVE COME: HE WILL NOT DELAY. AND MY RIGHTEOUS

^{1 2 3} This indicates that the 'sin' above referred to was the apostasy of Jewish converts; and it may be inferred from these expressions (as, indeed, was antecedently probable) that Jewish apostates from Christianity to Judaism were, before being re-admitted to the synagogue, required—1, to deny that Jesus was the Son of God;—2, to declare that His blood was rightly shed, as the blood of a malefactor;—3, to ascribe (as the Pharisees had done) the gifts of the Spirit (healing, tongues, etc.) to the operation of demons.

SERVANT SHALL WIN LIFE FROM HIS FAITH: YET, IF HE SHRINK BACK, MY SOUL HATH NO PLEASURE IN HIM.'—(*Habakkuk* 2: 3, 4). Nay, but our principle of action is not that shrinking back, which issues in destruction, but the faith which issues in the winning of life.

XI

Faith is that attitude of mind which is the foundation-rock on which hope stands, that which satisfies us of the reality of things as yet beyond our ken. It was through their exercise of this faith that the men of old had God's witness borne to their righteousness. It is through faith that we discern that the epochs of our earth's development were moulded by the fiat of God, that it was not His design that the world which we now look upon should be the outcome of a mere process of evolution—evolution from nothing but matter palpable to our senses.

Through faith it was that Abel offered to God a more perfect sacrifice than Cain: through which sacrifice he received the testimony of God that he was a righteous man, since God bore witness to the acceptability of his offerings; and through it he, though dead, is a living voice still.

Through faith it was that Enoch was caught away from earth to Heaven: he vanished, because He who had caught him away was God. I say so, because, before he was caught away, he had this testimony borne to him, that he had satisfied God; but without faith it is impossible to satisfy God. For the man who approaches God as a worshipper must necessarily believe that God exists, and that He proves Himself a repayer of those who earnestly seek Him.

Through faith it was that Noah, on receiving a revelation from God of an event of which there was as yet no visible sign, took warning, and constructed an ark for the deliverance of his own family. By his faith he not only passed censure on the world's unbelief, but he also won the inheritance of the righteousness which is developed in proportion to our faith.

Through faith it was that Abraham obeyed God's summons

to go out of his own land to the place which he was destined to receive as an inheritance. He went forth without knowing whither he was going. Through faith he transferred his home into the land indicated in God's promise, though for him it was still a land of aliens. It was but in an unsettled tent-life that he made his home there, as also did Isaac and Jacob, who were co-heirs with him of the same promise. For he was all the while waiting expectant for the city which has settled foundations, whose architect, whose builder, is God. Through faith did Sarah herself also receive bodily power for the conception of seed, even when past the age of maternity, simply because she felt that He who had given the promise was true and faithful. And so from one man, a man whose vitality had decayed, there sprang descendants multitudinous as the stars of heaven, countless as the countless sands on the sea-beach.

Sustained by the faith in which they had lived did all these die. They had not received the fulfilment of God's promises; but they had descried it afar, and had hailed the vision. They had acknowledged that upon this earth they were but strangers in a strange land, sojourners among aliens. I say so, because men who use such language as they did¹ thereby make it plain that they are still seeking a Home-land. Indeed, if, unsatisfied with that unsettled life, they had been home-sick for that country from which they were emigrants, it was still open to them to return to it. No, in point of fact, we find them still straining forward to a better, that is to say, a Heavenly Home-land. And this is why we find that God is not ashamed of them, is not ashamed to bear the title of 'THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, OF ISAAC, AND OF JACOB'; for it was for them that He had made ready a city.

Through faith it was that Abraham, when he was put to the test, offered up Isaac—yes, he who had welcomed God's promises was ready to offer up his only son, that son with

¹ Abraham—'I am a stranger and a sojourner with you' (*Genesis* 32: 4). Jacob—'The days of the years of my pilgrimage . . . the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.'—(*Genesis* 47: 9).

What shall I further say? The time will fail me if I go on to tell of Gideon, of Barak, of Samson, of Jephthah, of David, of Samuel, and of the prophets—men who through faith conquered kingdoms, won victories for righteousness, obtained the fulfilment of God's promises, closed the mouths of lions, quenched the might of fire, escaped the devourings of the sword, were out of frailty made strong, became suddenly resistless in battle, routed hosts of alien foes. Women received back their dead by a veritable resurrection; others were beaten to death, yet would not accept the opportunity of ransoming themselves by apostasy: no, they meant to win a resurrection far better than life on such terms. Others accepted the test of mocking outrage, of scourging, nay more, of the chain and the dungeon. Stoned to death were they, sawn asunder, lured with tempting offers: they died by the murderous sword. They went about clad only in skins of sheep and of goats, destitute, afflicted, cruelly treated—those who were too good for a world which treated them as outcasts!—wandering in desolate places and mountains, in caverns and in the rifts of the earth.

These, all these, were they who through that faith received tokens of God's approval: yet these did not actually receive the fulfilment of God's promise. Why so? Because God, with respect to *us*, looked onward to a higher blessing than was here attained by them, so that they might not reach that perfect state ere we could join them.

XII

Therefore let us, like them—since we have encompassing us that vast cloud of witnesses for the truth—put aside every encumbrance, put off the garment of sin that can so readily trammel our efforts, and with strong endurance let us race along the course that stretches before us, turning our eyes away from all else toward Jesus, to Him who gives the first impulse to our faith, to Him who brings it to final maturity. He too—the rapturous prize that lay full in His sight compensated for all—endured a cross, making light of the shame of it; and

respect to whom it had been said, 'IN THE LINE OF ISAAC SHALL THY RACE BE PERPETUATED.'—(*Genesis* 21: 12). For he reasoned that even from among the dead was God able to raise him up—indeed he did, figuratively speaking, actually receive him back from the dead.

Through faith it was that Isaac, looking far into the future, blessed Jacob and Esau. Through faith it was that Jacob, on his deathbed, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and bowed in worship over the head of his staff. Through faith it was that Joseph, as his end drew near, referred to the promise concerning the departure from Egypt of the children of Israel, and gave instructions respecting the disposal of his bones.

Through faith it was that Moses, after his birth, was concealed for a space of three months by his parents, because they saw how comely was their child, and they were not overawed by the King's edict. Through faith it was that Moses, when he was grown to manhood, rejected the title of 'Son of Pharaoh's Daughter.' He had made his choice: he preferred to share the oppression of God's people, than to retain the short-lived enjoyment of a sinful life. Greater wealth than Egypt's treasures did he esteem the opprobrium which trust in Messiah entailed; for still he looked away from these to the Hour of Repayment. Through faith it was that he left Egypt behind him, undismayed by the wrath of king Pharaoh; for, as one who gazed on the Invisible God, he was unflinching. Through faith it was that he instituted the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood which restrained the destroyer of the firstborn from touching his people. Through faith it was that they passed through the Red Sea, as over dry land; but when the Egyptians made the attempt, they were swallowed up in its depths.

Through faith it was that the walls of Jericho fell, after that seven days' march round them. Through faith it was that Rahab the harlot was not destroyed with those who had refused to surrender, since she had received the spies as a friend.

now has He taken His seat on the right hand of the throne of God. Lest you should grow weary, lest your hearts should fail, compare with your trials those of Him who bore unflinchingly that bitter opposition of men who thus sinned against their own selves. Not yet to the last extremity, not to the extent of shedding your own blood, have you stood firm in the struggle against sin. Have you forgotten the divine exhortation, which appeals to you as God's sons?—'MY SON, THINK NOT SCORN TO SUBMIT TO THE LORD'S CHASTENING, AND DO NOT LOSE HEART UNDER HIS REPROOF. FOR WHOM THE LORD LOVETH, HIM HE CHASTENETH, AND SCOURGETH EVERY SON WHOM HE ACCEPTETH.'—(*Proverbs* 3: 11, 12). It is for the ends of discipline that you now endure: as with sons is God dealing with you; for what sort of son is that whom his father neglects to chasten? But if you are to be exempt from such discipline, in which all His children share, it follows that you are but base-born, not true sons at all. Again, look at it thus: earthly fathers we all had, who chastened us, and we respected them for it:—shall we not all the more cheerfully submit our wills to the Father of Spirits, and gain life through union with Him? As for the chastisement which they inflicted, it extended over a brief period, it was guided by their own fallible judgment: what He inflicts is for our certain advantage, to make us partakers of His own holiness. I grant that all chastening, considered in the light of the immediate present, seems to be fraught, not with pleasure, but with pain; but in the long run it yields a harvest of peace to those who have been disciplined by it, a harvest of righteousness. Since this is so, 'BRACE YE THE NERVELESS HANDS AND THE PALSIED KNEES, STRAIGHT RUNNING PATHS MAKE YE FOR YOUR FEET, THAT THE LAME LIMB MAY NOT BE PUT OUT OF JOINT, BUT MAY THE RATHER BE HEALED.'—(*Isaiah* 35: 3). Let your steady aims be peace with all men, and that consecration without which no one shall see the Lord. Be on the watch to mark whether any one be losing ground in the grace of God, to mark whether there be any root of bitter poison springing up, which may wreck your peace, and

through which the greater part of you may be defiled; to mark whether there be any licentious person, any desecrater of hallowed things, such as was Esau, who for one single meal bartered away his rights as first-born. The act was irrevocable: you know how, even when he afterwards desired to have the blessing as his inheritance, his claim was disallowed—for he could find no opening for a revocation of his choice—although he pleaded hard, with tears, for the blessing.

There is every reason for your aiming at spirituality; for you have not, like those who received the first covenant, come close to the terrors of God, to a palpable kindled fire, to murky gloom and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice that syllabled words—a voice which made those who heard it implore that to them there might be no repetition of that utterance; for they could not bear to listen to the command as it pealed forth: ‘IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCH THE MOUNTAIN, IT SHALL BE STONED’: nay, Moses himself—so awful was the vision disclosed—said ‘I am terror-stricken, I quake in every limb!’ Ah no! you have come close to Mount Zion, to the city of the Living God, the Jerusalem on high, to untold hosts of angels, a great gathering and congregation of God’s first-born sons who are enrolled in the skies, to the God of all as Judge, to the spirits of the righteous perfected at last, to the Mediator of a New Covenant, even Jesus, and to that Blood of the Sprinkling which pleads for mercy—a mightier appeal than that of the blood of Abel, which cried for vengeance!

See to it that you refuse not to hearken to God who is speaking to you now. For, if those your ancestors did not escape the consequences of their unfaith, who refused to hearken to Moses who uttered on earth the oracles of God, much more certainly shall we not escape if we turn our backs on Him who is speaking from the heavens. He it is whose voice on that day made the earth reel to and fro: but now has He promised, saying, ‘ONCE MORE, ONCE ONLY, WILL I SHAKE, NOT THE EARTH ALONE, BUT THE VERY HEAVEN.’—(*Haggai* 2:6). Now the expression, ‘Once more, once only,’ plainly

indicates the sweeping away of the unstable things that rock to and fro, of the material creation, in order that the things unshaken may abide. Therefore, since the kingdom which we are receiving is immovable, let us hold fast God's grace, the means through which we may render service acceptably to God, with reverence and awe: for our God is an ever-consuming fire.

XIII

Let love for your brother-believers be a fixed principle with you. To show hospitality to strangers you must never forget: through doing so, some have unawares shown hospitality to angels. Remember always believers who are in prison: regard yourselves as fellow-prisoners with them. Remember those who are cruelly treated: bear in mind that you too, as being in the body, are liable to suffering.

Whatever purists may tell you, honour, not degradation, attends marriage, in every case: conjugal relations involve no defilement. It is on whoremongers and adulterers that God's sentence shall fall.

Let your character be untainted by greed of money. Be contented with what you have; for He has said, 'I WILL IN NO WISE FAIL THEE, NOR WILL I IN ANY WISE FORSAKE THEE.'—(*Joshua* 1: 5). So that we can take courage and say, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid: what shall man do to me?'

Remember those who once were your spiritual guides, they who uttered to you the Word of God. Contemplate the issue of their life, and imitate their faith. They have passed away; but Jesus the Messiah is the same yesterday and to-day; yea, also for ever. Since He is immutable, do not you drift about on a sea of heterogeneous and alien teachings: well is it for you that your heart be fast anchored on God's grace, not fettered to a code of clean and unclean meats. People who have made these the study of their life have gained no benefit from them. Such restrictions have no application to us: we already have an

altar of the Sacrifice of which *we* partake; but such as still cling to the superseded temple-service are disqualified from partaking of it. I say so, because, when the blood of the victims slain for the sin-offerings on the Day of Atonement is borne into the Holy Place by the high-priests, the bodies of these victims may not, like other sacrifices, be eaten by the worshippers, but are burnt outside the precincts of the camp. For this reason also Jesus, that He might consecrate God's people by His own blood, suffered without the gate, symbolising the fact that those who remain in Judaism have no part in Him. Therefore let us, who do accept Him, go forth to Him, outside the limits of Judaism, bearing the contumely which is heaped upon Him. We shall not be homeless: an abiding city we have, but not here: we aspire to that which is yet to be. Through Him, then, let us continually be offering up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, 'the fruit of our lips,' as they render thankful acknowledgment to His name.

To do kind actions and deeds of charity you must never forget: these too are sacrifices to God: and with such He is well pleased. Follow the advice of your spiritual leaders: yield them submission. They watch sleeplessly over your souls, as men who will have to render an account for them. Therefore hearken to them, so that they may render it with rejoicing, not with sighing; for this would be disastrous for you. Keep on praying for me and my helpers. We are convinced that we bear a good conscience, for we desire in all respects to live an honourable life. It is in order that I may be the sooner restored to you, that I more insistently appeal in this strain to you.

Now may the God of Peace, who by the Blood that sealed the eternal Covenant brought up from among the dead the great Shepherd of His sheep, even our Lord Jesus, make you perfect in all that is good, so that you may do His will. May He bring to pass in you the performance of what is well-pleasing in His sight, through the agency of Jesus the Messiah, and to Him be the glory through ages of ages, amen!

I appeal to you, my brothers; bear with this my appeal;

for indeed I am sending you but a brief summary of all that was in my mind.

You must know that our brother Timotheus has been released; and in his company, if he joins me very soon, I shall visit you.

Greet from me all your spiritual leaders, and all fellow-believers. The friends from Italy send you their greeting. God's grace be with you all: amen!